









Universal  
HISTORY  
OF THE WORLD

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*VOLUME FOUR*



# UNIVERSAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD

Written by One Hundred and Fifty of  
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all Branches of Historical Knowledge

Edited by  
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From the Empire under the  
Antonines to the Middle Ages



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# ROME THE BUILDER: HER ENGINEERING TRIUMPHS

The practical Genius that created for the  
Roman Empire its most abiding Memorials

By R. C. BOSANQUET F.S.A.

Late Professor of Classical Archaeology, Liverpool University; Author of  
Borcovicium, etc.

ROMAN civilization had a rural background. The qualities of the Roman were those of the yeoman farmer, hardy and dogged, absorbed in practical detail, caring little for things of the spirit. The distinctive characteristic of Roman farming was its logical thoroughness. Whereas the Greek, a townsman by instinct, took the country as he found it, adapting his cultivated area to the lie of the land and using dry torrent beds for his roads, the Roman imposed his rigid system upon it. Rectangular fields and straight roads were traditional in Italy and were laid out in each new colony as it was founded. The Romans shrank from no labour to attain the efficient organization without which they could not live content. So their empire was an empire of builders and engineers, and in every part of it roads, bridges, aqueducts, town-halls and public baths remain as witnesses of their beneficent energy.

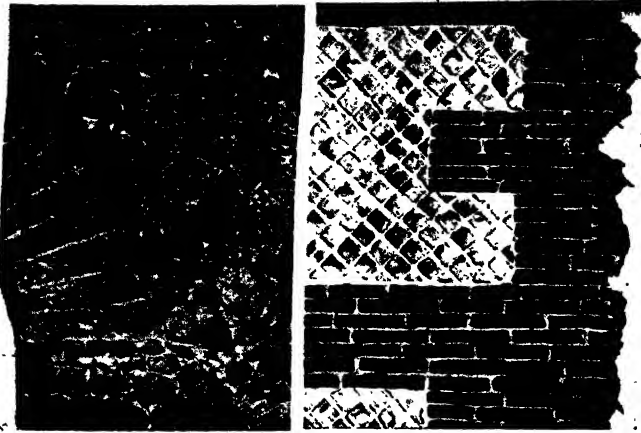
In early times the people of Latium had been forced to find means of draining a water-logged soil. Much of the plain between the Alban Hills and the sea has a tufa subsoil and water-bearing strata below it; and the Alban Hills themselves, a cluster of extinct craters, form natural reservoirs from which water soaks into the lower strata and wells up under pressure in the surrounding lowlands. In consequence large tracts of the Campagna are saturated like a sponge, and the rainfall being unable to penetrate the wet ground flows away over the surface, removing the fertile top soil.

As a remedy there was devised a system of tunnels cut in the tufa, following the sides of the shallow valleys so as to intercept the springs which rise on the slopes,

and delivering into ditches or stream beds. These works carried out on an enormous scale made the region fertile and healthy. Since no Roman writer refers to them it seems probable that they were completed in the period of Etruscan domination.

The process of draining the plain taught the first tillers of the soil how to take levels and drive tunnels. Their successors, in early republican times, proceeded to the more difficult task of draining the mountain reservoirs that fed the troublesome springs below. The best known of these undertakings, a tunnel to drain the Alban Lake, is dated by tradition in 396 B.C.; and here the work was so well done that the tunnel has been in use ever since,

A larger enterprise was the attempt of Claudius to drain the Fucine Lake, a basin in the limestone hills fifty-five miles east of Rome, in order to relieve the district from risk of flood, **Draining an entire lake** to reclaim land for tillage and to make the lower course of the Liris navigable; it has been realized in modern times and has brought under cultivation fifty-eight square miles of lake bed. The engineers of Claudius drove a tunnel three and a half miles long. The levels were accurately taken and the section of the tunnel if properly carried out would have been adequate. Thirty thousand men were employed on the work for eleven years, but thorough and exact workmanship cannot be expected from forced labour. This, rather than the dishonesty of Narcissus, the emperor's minister, may explain the astonishing irregularities found in the actual cutting. The completion of the work was celebrated by a mimic sea-fight on the lake, but when the moment came for the opening of the tunnel it failed



#### METHODS OF THE ROMAN BUILDER

Roman walls were of concrete faced with brick or stone. When the facing was of irregular tufa lumps it was called 'opus incertum' (left); when of regular pieces set diamond-wise, with points facing inwards, 'opus reticulatum'; when of thin triangular bricks similarly disposed, 'opus testaceum.' Right, 'opus reticulatum' with quoins of 'testaceum.'

to do its work. When floods recurred in the second century the engineers of Trajan and Hadrian could not make good the faulty execution.

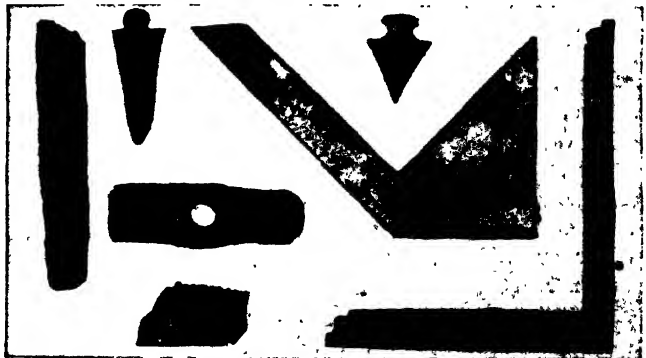
Roman engineers and builders used a wide range of materials and processes. In comparing their methods with ours it must be remembered that they made practically no use of cast iron, but that timber was cheaper and more abundant than it is to-day. They handled wood with astonishing freedom and skill, and something must be said of their achievements in this material before we deal with the surviving monuments of stone, brick and concrete. The forests of Italy, Gaul and the Adriatic coast furnished unlimited supplies of wood for ship-building, house construction and other purposes. For the main structure of bridges and public buildings timber was the normal material in early republican times. Theatres, amphitheatres and circuses, sometimes of great size, were built of wood as late as the first century after Christ. As the Empire expanded northwards, the armies carried with them this old Italian tradition; the Romans built wooden bridges, fortified their earth

campes with wooden towers and gateways, and fenced much of the northern frontier with a palisade of split tree-trunks. The wharves of London, and other northern ports were mostly built of timber, while stone quays were used in the Mediterranean.

The first teachers of the arts in central and northern Italy were the Etruscans. Under Etruscan rule the cities of Latium and Campania adopted the Tuscan style, and built temples with widely spaced wooden columns and terracotta facings. From skilful handling of wood they went on to work the soft volcanic tufa, abundant throughout the

region, and to adorn it with facings and mouldings of stucco. Since tufa was easily cut into square blocks, regular courses (a 'course' is the range of masonry on one level in a building) became a fixed characteristic. In other districts where the material was hard limestone, labour was saved by using irregular blocks and fitting them together with a minimum of shaping. This produced 'polygonal' masonry, once thought to be of early date but now known to have survived under the Empire.

A leading feature of Etruscan architecture was the frank adoption of the



#### USED BY ROMAN CARPENTERS AND MASONS

In view of the reputation of the Romans as builders these tools that they actually used are of compelling interest. Hammer-head (centre, left), set-squares and plummets can be recognized; and the fragments of saws remind us of the extensive part once played by wood-work in Roman construction.

British Museum

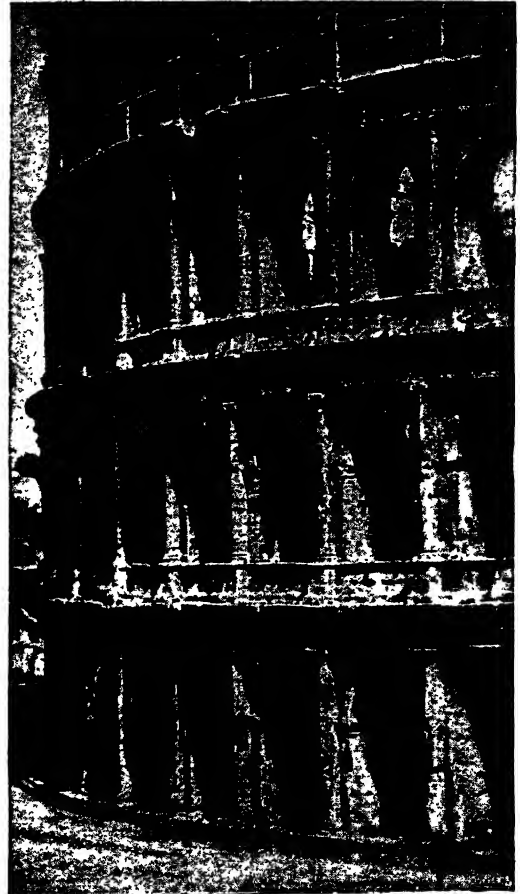
arch, long known but only sparingly used in the Near East and in Greece. The Etruscans, and after them the Romans, employed the arch, the vault and the dome, making the semicircle a normal element in their architectural design.

The search for a better stone led to experiments with travertine, a hard white limestone quarried near Tivoli, whence it was transported by water. As the Romans came to know the smooth ashlar of Greek public buildings, they grew dissatisfied with the rough surfaces of volcanic tufa and conglomerate, and travertine became the normal material for public buildings.

Meanwhile, Etruscan influence was waning and Greek taking its place. It was Hellenistic builders who popularised the use of lime mortar from the third century B.C. onwards. Hitherto sun-dried bricks had been used in cheap construction, but it was now possible to build with a mixture of rubble and lime. This led to the discovery, first made at Puteoli, that the local volcanic earth when mixed with lime furnished an almost indestructible cement. Since 'pozzolana,' as it is now called, can be trusted to set under water, it was used for sea-walls and jetties, as well as for foundations and temple platforms. In the second century B.C. deposits of pozzolana were found in and near Rome, and concrete made with it was used for walls and then for vaults.

This development made possible the triumphs of imperial Roman architecture, in particular the roofing of vast spaces

such as the halls of public baths and palaces. It was self-dom used without some kind of facing, which was often composed of small lumps of tufa arranged without pattern (second century B.C.), or in a regular net pattern (first century). The latter was combined with quoins (or corner-blocks) of brick and bonding courses of tile. Another method was to face the concrete with continuous courses of brick, made triangular so that each might be firmly held by the concrete behind it. Walls so constructed were coated with stucco varying from coarse rough-cast to the fine plaster made of lime and pounded marble that was used for mouldings, and as a surface for fresco painting.



GREEK DETAILS ON ROMAN BUILDING

The Colosseum well shows the adorning with Greek architecture of a fundamentally Roman structure; it is the arches, not the engaged columns, that bear the weight. The storeys are Tuscan-Doric, Ionic and Corinthian in style.

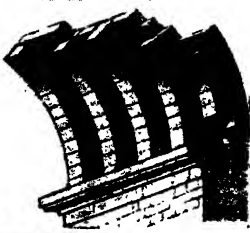
*Photo, Anderson*

In public buildings and palaces the walls were veneered and the floors paved with slabs of marble and other costly stones. Whereas the Greeks had used walls and roofs of solid marble for their temples, and that marble plain white with only a few painted enrichments, the Romans obtained a more brilliant colour effect by using variegated stones. Since these were brought from a distance they were cut in thin slices and made to go as far as possible. There was an increasing divorce between the massive core, a typically honest and permanent construction, and the showy facing which masked it. The saws used for cutting these veneering slabs were driven by water-power.



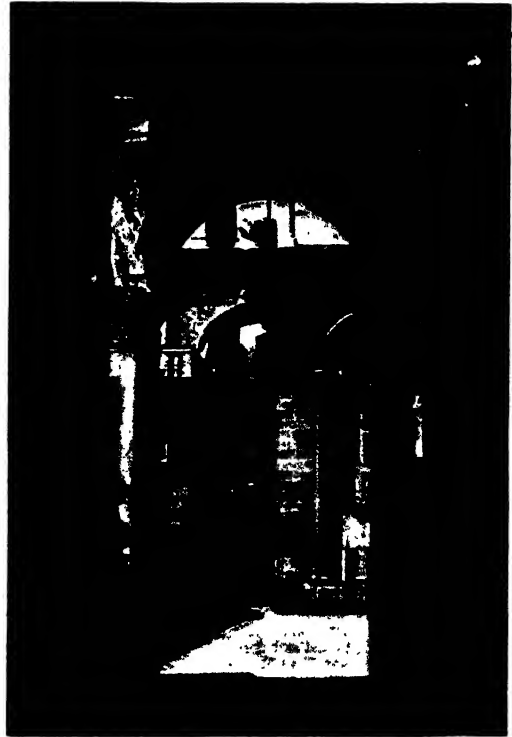
On the outside of such buildings Roman construction and Greek decorative methods were combined. Façades supported by one or more tiers of arches were faced with half-columns bearing architraves, a mere screen of traditional decoration. In the Colosseum three such orders of columns are superimposed, but the whole weight of the structure is borne by the arches. So strong was the Greek tradition that centuries passed before architects placed the arch direct upon the columns, yet occasional examples occur from the Antonine age onwards. It was perhaps in the palace of Diocletian at Spalato (about A.D. 300) that the system was first given prominence in a great imperial building.

The Romans had learned from the Etruscans how to build stone barrel vaults, which had been invented in the East. In the first century B.C. more complex forms appeared. The colossal terraced temple of Fortune at Praeneste, that of Hercules at Tibur (Tivoli) and the Tabularium or record



**STONE BARREL VAULT AT NIMES**

The 'Temple of Diana' at Nîmes is a stone-vaulted structure buttressed from the inside, the buttresses (also used, unnecessarily, for concrete vaults) being disguised as projections between niches. Above, construction of ribbed vault.



**ARCH ON PILLARS AT SPALATO**

The palace of Diocletian at Spalato was the first important building where arch and column were structurally combined, the arch springing direct from the capital without an architrave and thus inaugurating medieval architecture.

*Photo, F.N.A.*

office at Rome all belong to the age of Sulla, and have features in common which suggest that they were designed by one and the same architect; in each of them we find more complex vaulting, including the use of cruciform piers from which spring four vault-arches. The developed cross vault with groins appears in Nero's reign, and in his Golden Palace there is a remarkable octagon room, sixteen feet in diameter, roofed with a spherical vault.

During the first century after Christ, timber of large dimensions was probably becoming scarce, yet the need of covering vast spaces, especially the halls and baths, became more pressing. Timber roofs were now the exception. Since even the wooden centrings used in building concrete vaults were costly, a method was devised of using bricks to form a skeleton of transverse and diagonal ribs above which the background of the vault was afterwards filled in. Above the brick

skeleton was formed the actual vault, immensely strong because composed of pozzolana, lime and broken stone.

Once set, such a vault 'was quite devoid of any lateral thrust, and covered its space with the rigidity of a metal lid.' Buttresses had been necessary to take the thrust of stone vaults, and this traditional feature survived, perhaps because Roman builders did not appreciate

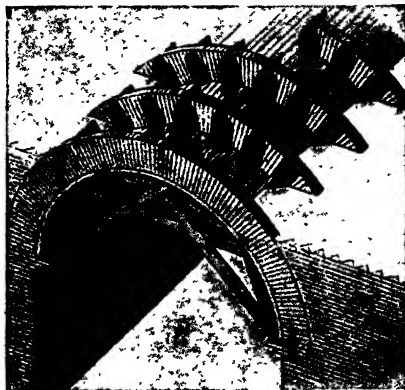
the static qualities of their concrete vaults.

Gradually, however, they modified the old system, and transferred the buttresses to the inside of a vaulted hall, thus breaking up the inner wall by a series of recesses and projections. The temple of Diana at Nîmes is an interesting example of this arrangement associated with stone vaulting. The Pantheon at Rome has eight interior buttresses, flanked alternately by square and round recesses. This principle was carried further in the great baths and basilicas. The span of the dome of the Pantheon is slightly over 142 feet. The tepidarium of the baths of Caracalla is 183 feet long and 79 feet wide; that of the baths of Diocletian 210 by 80 feet. In the basilica of Maxentius the main hall is over 80 feet wide, and is roofed by three gigantic cross vaults, resting on eight supporting columns over 60 feet high.

The roads of the Roman Empire are its greatest monument. Cities crumbled, aqueducts ceased to flow, but the roads, however worn and neglected, continued to bear the traffic of the Middle Ages, and since their course was well chosen many of them are in use to-day. Their original purpose was strategic and administrative; but as the Empire grew they were the arteries along which its life-blood flowed. They illustrate the Italian engineer's instinctive preference for straight lines and massive construction. Greek road makers were content to retain the windings of the primitive track, and the plans of their fortresses, adapted to natural contours, were as various as those of mediæval

castles. The Roman drove his straight highway across, and at times through or under, natural obstacles.

But the preference for a straight line was not observed with rigid pedantry. Ideal straightness was sacrificed in mountainous districts to other considerations—easy gradients, avoidance of unnecessary descent, and command of ground. There could be no greater contrast than the tortuous line by which the Flaminian Way crosses the Apennines from Rome to Rimini, and the arrow-like course of its continuation, the Via Aemilia, which runs straight over fifty miles from Rimini to Piacenza—a contrast due to the country they traverse. The one creeps from ridge to ridge on the bleak Umbrian hills, or along a cliff



**CONCRETE VAULT OF DIOCLETIAN'S BATHS**

The concrete vault was a Roman invention. A brick skeleton was first constructed as in the top diagram, and the concrete poured in between the ribs. After setting, the ribs showed like girders from the inside (below).

From Choisy, *'L'art de bâtir chez les Romains'*

face between towering crags. The plain beyond is so level that the road dominated the landscape and gave its name, Aemilia, to the whole region.

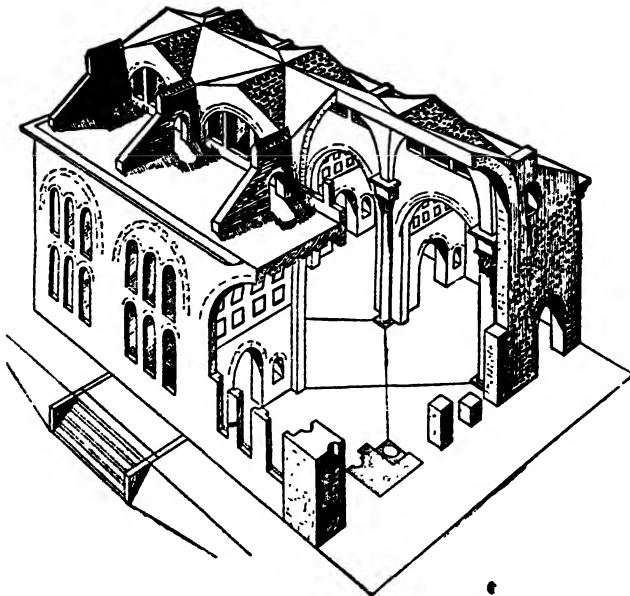
In Britain the same contrast may be drawn between the course of Agricola's road where it winds through the Cheviots and its straight track across the basin of Teviot and Tweed, and in this case we can see how the Roman surveyor sighted his line on a conspicuous peak, one of the triple Eildon Hills after which the fort of Trimontium was named. The method was to lay the road straight from point to point, and in undulating country the line was made up of straight sections sighted from one ridge to the next.

A Greek geographer in the reign of Augustus notes how skilfully the roads radiating from Rome had been graded by cuttings through hills and by embankments across valleys, 'so that a wagon can take the load of a barge,' a significant phrase implying that heavy goods normally went by water. The process of improvement continued for centuries. Here is a typical instance. At the ninth milestone from Rome the republican road to

Praeneste descended into a ravine and crossed a brook by a small one-arched bridge. This was replaced under the Empire by a high-level bridge of seven arches, 52 feet above the stream, a bridge so well constructed that it is still in use. Its width (33 feet) exceeds that of the road on either side, as is the case with the newest bridges on our main roads to-day.

The roads from the capital must have been as busy with horse traffic as the roads round London in the age of coaches and curricles. The Via Appia offers notable instances of the measures taken to save time on a main thoroughfare. It was laid out in 312 B.C., running south-east from Rome to Capua, and set a standard of undeviating straightness to later road-makers. The high embankment that carries it in a mathematically straight line was due to its designer, but the paving of lava slabs still visible for long stretches in the Campagna, the massive viaduct crossing the valley of Aricia, and the rock-cutting 120 feet deep through a promontory at Terracina, are typical improvements of the imperial age.

The populous region round the Bay of Naples presented difficulties to the road-maker because the coast was broken up by volcanic ridges and craters. A solution was found in tunnel roads, an expedient that remained rare in antiquity. Agrippa was a pioneer in this as in other branches of engineering. In 37 B.C. he converted the gloomy, land-locked cup of Lake Avernus into a naval harbour and connected it with Cumae, the nearest town, by a subterranean road three-quarters of a mile long, with shafts for lighting and ventilation. About the same time a tunnel road was made through the cliffs from Pausilypon, now Posilipo, to Naples. It is partly lined with stone and varies in width from 13 to 21 feet, and in height from 13 to 28 feet. It was a public



#### HOW THE BASILICA OF MAXENTIUS WAS VAULTED

What could be achieved with the Roman concrete vault is well shown by the Basilica of Maxentius (c. 310) in Rome, here reconstructed. The space which the three massive cross vaults have to roof is more than 80 feet in width, and the eight columns that support them are more than 60 feet high.

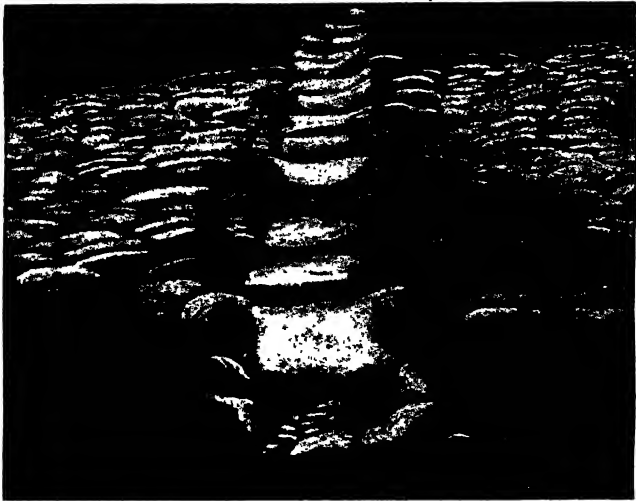
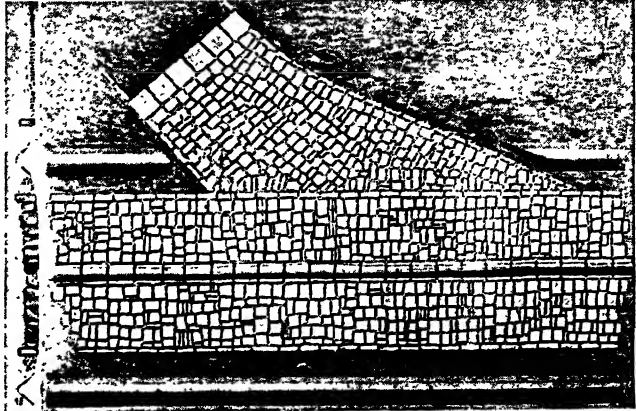
From 'The Legacy of Rome,' Clarendon Press

thoroughfare in the time of Augustus, but one of his immediate successors seems to have appropriated it as a private drive. It was replaced as a public road by another tunnel, the well-known Grotta di Posilipo, which is still in use.

Second only to the Appian Way was the Flaminian, the great north road leading to Gaul, Germany and the Danube provinces, and crossing Apennines and Alps by splendid triumphs of engineering. It was started in 220 B.C. to link Rome with the alluvial plains on both sides of the Po, which had recently been conquered and colonised; but here too emperor after emperor made costly improvements.

The forces of nature have dealt hardly with Roman roads in the Alps, but enough remains to show that they chose open ridges and avoided ravines that would require bridging. The carriage roads are seldom more than 12 feet wide, the pack trails less. The builders have left few monumental remains. We can point, however, to the 'Roman Gate' in Dauphiné on the road from Briançon to Grenoble, where the road was carried on corbels along the mountain side and then passed under a rock-cut arch 10 feet wide and high.

The materials used were the best to be found in each district, and the construction varied with the materials. The

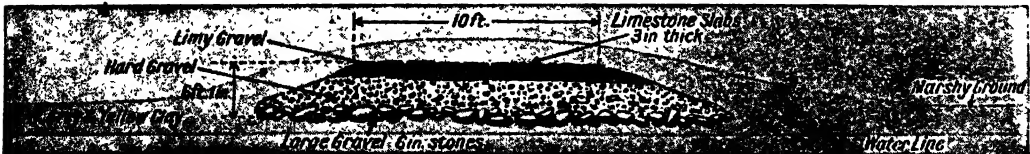


#### ROMAN LOOP ROAD IN LANCASHIRE

A Roman road, known as the Devil's Pavement, passes over Blackstone Edge from Yorkshire into Lancashire. The excavation above was made where a loop road diverges: a later addition that shows how these roads were always being improved, and that there was no fixed tradition of straightness.

From Richmond, 'Roman Road across Blackstone Edge'

breadth of main roads in the northern provinces was greater than in Italy. They were often twenty or more feet broad and bounded by a ditch and bank on either



#### HOW ROMAN ENGINEERS CONSTRUCTED WATLING STREET

A section through Watling Street near Wigmore revealed that it follows closely the prescriptions of Vitruvius. On a surface of virgin soil (the 'gremium') was laid a foundation of cobbles (the 'statumen'); next came 18 inches of gravel of which the upper 4 inches were concreted with lime—this corresponds well enough with the 'rudus' and 'nucleus' of Vitruvius, 9 inches of rubble underlying 6 inches of broken brick and pottery. On top of all was the 'pavimentum' of irregular limestone slabs.

From Jash, 'Excavations on the Site of Magna'



#### WITH SURFACE STILL IN GOOD REPAIR

Through the Forest of Dean there can still be traced a Roman road, probably part of one running from Glevum (Gloucester) to Isca Silurum (Caerleon). On this section at Blackpool Bridge the curb-stones are still neatly in place.

*Photo, B. C. Clwyton*

side. Marshes were crossed by driving in piles and nailing on them a platform of tree trunks; or an embankment of earth

and stone was held up by piles and walls at either side. The milestones were round pillars bearing the emperor's name, and were frequently renewed.

The roads were well supplied with bridges, for they were intended to maintain communications in winter as well as in summer, and would have failed of their purpose if messengers and convoys had been delayed at fords and ferries, impassable in flood and always dangerous for heavy transport. So sound was the design, so solid the construction, of the stone bridges built in the last half-century of the Republic and under the Empire that a number of them carry traffic to-day. But in this, as in the other branches of building, wood preceded stone. At Rome the Pons Sublicius or 'Pile Bridge' was believed to be a work of one of the early kings, and to have retained its original form from the seventh century. When it needed repairs, special rites were performed; no metal might be used in the fabric. It stood throughout the Empire, a reminder of the day when the Rome's chief defence and she might at any time need to break down the bridge.



#### RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FIRST STONE BRIDGE TO SPAN THE TIBER

The earliest stone bridge across the Tiber at Rome was from this fact familiarly known as the 'Pons Lapideus,' though its more official name, Pons Aemilius, derives from one of its two builders, M. Aemilius Lepidus and M. Fulvius Nobilior. It was begun in 179 B.C., but not given its final form before 142, when the wooden superstructure resting on stone piers was replaced by six stone arches. Its place is now occupied by the medieval Ponte Rotto.

*After Delbrück, 'Hellenistische Bauten in Latium'*



Unlike the Pons Aemilius, the Pons Fabricius at Rome (built by L. Fabricius, 62 B.C.) is still standing and is indeed one of the best preserved Roman bridges in the world. Only the parapet is modern, and even of that one fragment is ancient, a pilaster crowned by a four-headed Janus that gives its modern name of Ponte dei Quattro Capi to the structure.

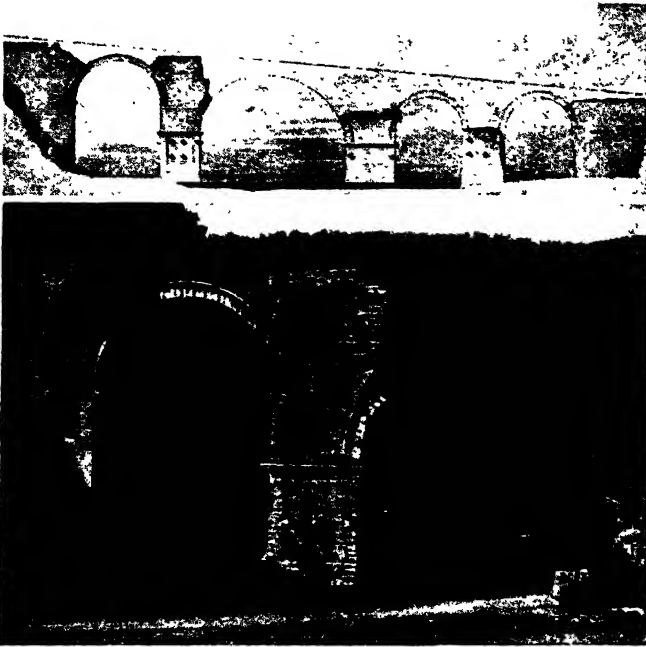
*Photo, Kenneth Comyn*



#### **TWO OF THE BRIDGES THAT CARRIED ROMAN TRAFFIC IN ITALY**

The Pons Fabricius at the top of the page, it will be noticed, has a subsidiary arch high up in the spandrel between each of the main arches; this was intended to give extra freeway for flood water when the Tiber rose. These flood arches were not always necessary, as in the Bridge of Augustus at Ariminum (modern Rimini) above, built in A.D. 22; but a feeling that the blank space needed some sort of treatment has led to the substitution of pillared niches.

*Photo, Emilia, Bologna*



#### MAGNIFICENT IN DECAY : THE NAR BRIDGE

Some of the finest bridges were in the provinces. In Italy itself the bridge that Augustus built to carry the Flaminian Way over the Nar (a tributary of the Tiber) was the most impressive. One arch still stands ; the others were unequal in span, as shown in the reconstruction drawing (top).

*Photo, Alinari ; reconstruction after Delbrück*

The first stone bridges, of a type familiar in the East and in the Greek world, had stone piers and a wooden superstructure. Such was the Pons Aemilius, built in 179 B.C., and rebuilt with six stone arches in 142 B.C. Long after, when it was one of six or seven stone bridges within the city bounds, people still spoke of it as the Stone Bridge, for it marked an epoch—the application to bridge-building of a method long used for culverts and gateways.

Other early examples are the Bridge of Fabricius (62 B.C.) which replaced a wooden bridge linking Rome with the island in the Tiber, and the Bridge of Cestius linking the island with the farther bank: the former well preserved, the latter rebuilt in modern times. During the demolition of the Cestian bridge its foundations were examined ; they proved to be of concrete enclosed by a double range of oak piles, and the great blocks of the piers and arches were found to be tied together with iron cramps and pins. Outside Rome the wooden Pons Mulvius,

carrying the Flaminian Way across the Tiber, was rebuilt with stone arches in 109 B.C., and the process was gradually extended along the great roads and into the provinces. In general these early specimens show the characteristic features that were to persist in later centuries: massive piers with pointed cut-waters upstream, one or more semicircular arches of moderate span for the main channel, and a graduated succession of smaller arches for flood water. The piers were broad and closely set, which makes for strength but reduces the freeway ; so an additional flood arch was often provided high in the face of each principal pier.

That this type of design provides an ample margin of stability is proved by the long life of many Roman bridges. Such are the five-arched bridge of Rimini (A.D. 22), with an ornamental niche replacing the flood arch in each spandrel ; that of Sommières in Provence with seventeen arches, of which seven suffice for the present stream ; that of twenty-one arches on a by-road from Minturnae to Teanum on the borders of Latium and Campania, built in concrete faced with brick and having two tiers of arches over its central piers ; and the granite bridge of Merida in Spain (page 2237) crossing the broad Guadiana, with sixty arches of varying width. The Via Trajana from Beneventum to Bari is carried across the shallow beds of two dangerous winter-torrents by bridges of exceptional length, fourteen and ten arches respectively, extended by embankments at either end.

Where river-banks were low the use of semicircular arches made necessary a considerable ascent from either side. This 'humped profile' is the one fault in the Pons Aelius (see page 1971), the finest of the bridges at Rome. On the other hand, perhaps because they were accustomed to carry aqueducts across valleys at a high level, Roman engineers were



reluctant to set a bridge lower than its approaches. Constantine in Algeria, the ancient Cirta, offers a good example; it is a natural fortress, guarded by a deep winding ravine. The Roman engineers instead of descending into the lower and narrower part of the gorge kept the road level by building a viaduct on two tiers of arches, 216 feet in height, 200 feet long, and 25 feet wide. It collapsed in 1857 and was replaced by an iron bridge.

Among the improvements made by Augustus on the Via Flaminia was a lofty bridge, 140 yards long, which crossed the valley of the Nar. One graceful arch still stands; of three fallen arches the largest had a span of about 105 feet. Its height above the stream, 98 feet, excited the admiration of Procopius in the sixth century A.D.—he calls it the highest arch known to him. It is surpassed, however, by a famous structure in central Spain, still known by its Moorish name of Alcántara, 'The Bridge' (see page 2048). In 1847 Ford wrote:

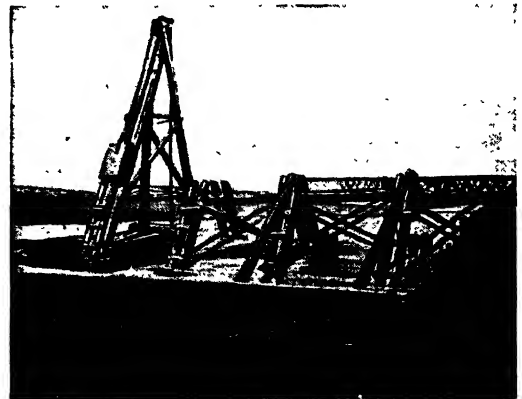
It stems the rock-walled lonely Tagus, striding across the wild gorge. The deep sullen river rolls through a desolate arid country and here resembles a mountain-enclosed narrow lake; but the bridge is the soul of the scene, and looms like a huge skeleton, the work of men when there were giants on the earth: loneliness and magnitude are the emphatic features; grey with the colouring of seventeen centuries, during which it has resisted the action of the elements, and the worse injuries of man.

It is 177 feet in height, and the largest of its six unequal arches has a span of 118 feet. The roadway is perfectly horizontal and the soffits—the downward surfaces—of the arches are kept in line below it by springing them from different levels, a device more than usually effective in this case because the piers also start from different levels on the rocky side of the gorge. On a simple arch which spans the roadway at the centre of the bridge are inscribed a dedication to Trajan, dated A.D. 106, a list of neighbouring towns which shared the cost, and the name of the architect.

The regions where Roman bridges can best be studied are Italy, Spain and southern France. But there are many in Asia Minor, Syria and North Africa, for

the most part ruinous through neglect. Arched bridges played little or no part in the northern provinces, where the older type with timber superstructure continued to hold its own, the supports being wooden piles or floating pontoons or stone piers. Those that Julius Caesar found and used in Gaul were of wood throughout, and the skill that his troops had acquired in improvising them was proved in 55 B.C., when they threw a trestle bridge across the Rhine. It was, as he himself wrote, 'a very difficult task owing to the breadth, depth and swiftness of the stream,' and he took pains to record the design of the structure, which was completed in ten days. It served for a brief campaign, and was then demolished. Though a temporary work, it indicates a degree of skill and resource that later engineering science has not surpassed.

The first stone-pier bridge on the middle or lower Rhine was built at Mainz, probably towards the end of the first century after Christ, the second at Cologne in 310. The former, over half a mile long, seems to have had twenty-six piers, 50 to 100 feet apart, and a timber roadway. The foundations were laid by sinking a timber frame of the dimensions of the pier, driving huge iron-shod piles within and without, and packing the inside with stones to form a platform from which the ashlar courses started. In many cases,



DETAILS OF A MILITARY BRIDGE

Caesar's trestle bridge over the Rhine was a marvel of military engineering, since it was completed in ten days. Double baulks of pointed timber were driven in by pile drivers, the roadway being of cross-joists, wattles and earth.

*Musée de St. Germain*





### CONTEMPORARY PICTURE OF TRAJAN'S BRIDGE

Permanent bridges on the northern confines of the Empire were avoided, the old system of stone piers with wooden superstructure being retained. The most famous example is Trajan's bridge over the Danube, of which some of the piers remain to this day; its wooden trusses are depicted on Trajan's Column.

*From Cichorius, 'Die Traianssäule'*

as in the piers of Roman bridges in North-umberland, the masonry was tied together with iron cramps. At Cologne the engineers re-used a variety of mouldings in their foundations, a sign that the break-up of the classical world had begun.

The bridging of the lower Danube by Trajan was a feat of engineering as remarkable in its way as Caesar's spectacular work on the Rhine. Remains of it may still be seen near Turnu Severin, where the Danube emerges from the defile of the Iron Gates and forms the boundary between Serbia and Roumania. It was 1,225 yards long, divided into two sections by an island, and the span between its piers was as much as 125 feet. The foundations were of concrete, faced with ashlar and resting on piles; in view of the depth and force of the stream it is probable that coffer-dams were used. A representation of this bridge on Trajan's Column shows that the architect, Apollodorus, used an arch-like system of timber trusses to support the roadway. Built in A.D. 105-106, to secure communication with the newly conquered province of Dacia, it is said to have been dismantled a few years later as a precaution against barbarian raids.

These great stone-pier bridges had many smaller counterparts in the northern provinces. They did not wholly supersede the all-timber type, which some-

times had picturesque features. One near Heidelberg bore a little chapel containing a statue of Neptune, the god of waterways, dedicated by an architect, presumably the designer of the whole work. Trèves was long served by such a wooden bridge; the fine stone piers that are still in use may belong to the rebuilding of the town when it became one of the four capitals of the Empire. In Britain stone piers have been observed at several river-crossings on the Roman road which led from York into Scotland, notably at Corbridge, where the bridge was 154 yards long with ten water-piers and a probable breadth of 20 feet;

at Chollerford on the line of the Roman Wall, where remains of two successive stone bridges can be distinguished; and at Newcastle-on-Tyne where the piers of Hadrian's Pons Aelius long served as foundations for the medieval bridge.

Enough has been said to show that in bridge-building as in other branches of engineering the Romans were bold and resourceful, not tied to traditional forms but ready to treat each problem on its merits. They aimed at stability and practical convenience rather than outward effect, and for that very reason their structures, massive and unadorned, convey a sense of grandeur and power.

We are better informed about the aqueducts that supplied the city of Rome than about any other department of Roman engineering, thanks to the preservation of an official report on them by a great public servant, Julius Frontinus, who was commissioner of water supply in the early years of the second century after Christ. There were nine aqueducts in his day, four dating from Republican times, three from the reign of Augustus, and two from that of Claudius. Soon after the writing of this treatise another was added by Trajan, and an eleventh followed a century later. They were all low-pressure aqueducts, conveying the water in concrete channels

with numerous shafts for ventilation. The channel is always large enough to permit a man to pass through.

The earliest, like the Appian Way, was the work of Appius Claudius Caecus, censor in 312 B.C. Its course of about ten miles was mainly underground. The next (270 B.C.), more than four times as long, tapped the River Anio some ten miles above Tivoli; it, too, was subterranean. In 144 B.C. the Aqua Marcia, a much bolder work, was constructed at a higher level, running seven miles above ground; and whereas its predecessors supplied only the lower quarters of the town, it was high enough to reach the Capitol. Its length was over fifty miles. Little need be said of the Republican and Augustan additions, but the Aqua Claudia (built A.D. 38-52) merits description. This, the noblest of the series, starts in the Sabine mountains near the source of the Aqua Marcia and takes a more direct course, about forty-five miles, of which ten are above ground. Its arches are an impressive feature in

views of the Campagna. At the same time a new supply was brought from the upper course of the Anio, a direct distance of forty-two miles. The muddy water required a special system of purification and its quality was improved by Trajan, who lengthened the aqueduct by five miles and used as settling-tanks the three lakes that Nero had formed to embellish his villa at Subiaco.

The total length of the fourteen aqueducts which supplied Rome was two hundred and sixty-five miles. Estimates of the daily supply vary widely—a cautious recent calculation puts the yield of the four principal aqueducts at about 700,000 cubic metres per diem. As early as the reign of Augustus almost every house had its pipe from the main (see the examples in page 2044), its cisterns and taps.

The provision made for the capital was generous, but the needs of other cities and even of country districts were not neglected. Throughout the provinces there



**LAND ABUTMENT OF A BRIDGE IN ROMAN BRITAIN**

Where they crossed the North Tyne the Roman Wall in Britain and the military road running behind it coalesced, and a massive bridge both continued the barrier of the wall and bore the road over the river. It was a bridge of the northern-provincial type, that is, stone piers carrying a wooden superstructure; no doubt the gaps could be closed with portcullises. Above is one of the land abutments; the dressed blocks that form it were fastened with iron cramps.

*Photo, John Gibson*



**GREAT CISTERNS AT CARTHAGE**

In provinces like Africa where water was scarce it was necessary to store it as well as merely convey it to the city. Hence the aqueduct at Carthage, for instance, discharged into huge cisterns which further acted as settling-tanks.

*Photo, G. R. Ballance*

grew up a system of storage and supply far in advance of anything previously known, and in many regions surpassing what exists to-day. In North Africa, Arabia and Syria tracts now deserted were then fruitful and populous.

These provinces, where the rainfall was uncertain, offer many examples both of barrages blocking a valley so as to form a collecting basin and also of immense storage cisterns in the neighbourhood of towns. On the other hand, where the supply was abundant, as at Rome, little storage was thought necessary, and such reservoirs as existed were provided as settling tanks at the starting point. The cutting of the aqueducts in time of war was an easy matter since they were generally visible as they approached the city; this was sometimes followed, as at Naples in A.D. 536, by a night-surprise, a party of the enemy having crept along the empty conduit and emerged by an inspection shaft within the walls.

The most famous aqueduct outside Rome is the gigantic Pont du Gard which carries the water supply of Nîmes across the gorge of the River Gard. It made a lasting impression on the mind of the young Rousseau :

I felt lost like an insect in the immensity of the work. I felt along with the sense of my own littleness something nevertheless that seemed to uplift my soul. I said to myself with a sigh, 'Oh, that I had been born a Roman.'

This stately pile is only one section of a work twenty miles in length, carried out of sight for the most part and manifesting the same skill and resource in combating difficulties underground. Its height is 160 feet, and the span of its principal



**• AMONG THE FINEST MONUMENTS OF ROMAN RULE : THE CARTHAGINIAN AQUEDUCT**

The aqueduct that brought water to Roman Carthage ranks second to none in the Empire—its dignified arches stretch interminably across the plains between the mountains of Tunis and the city. These structures must have involved immense labour compared with a modern pipe-line, but it must be remembered that work and materials were cheap, whereas metal was expensive, nor was it then possible to make a pipe of large enough bore to carry the necessary volume of water.

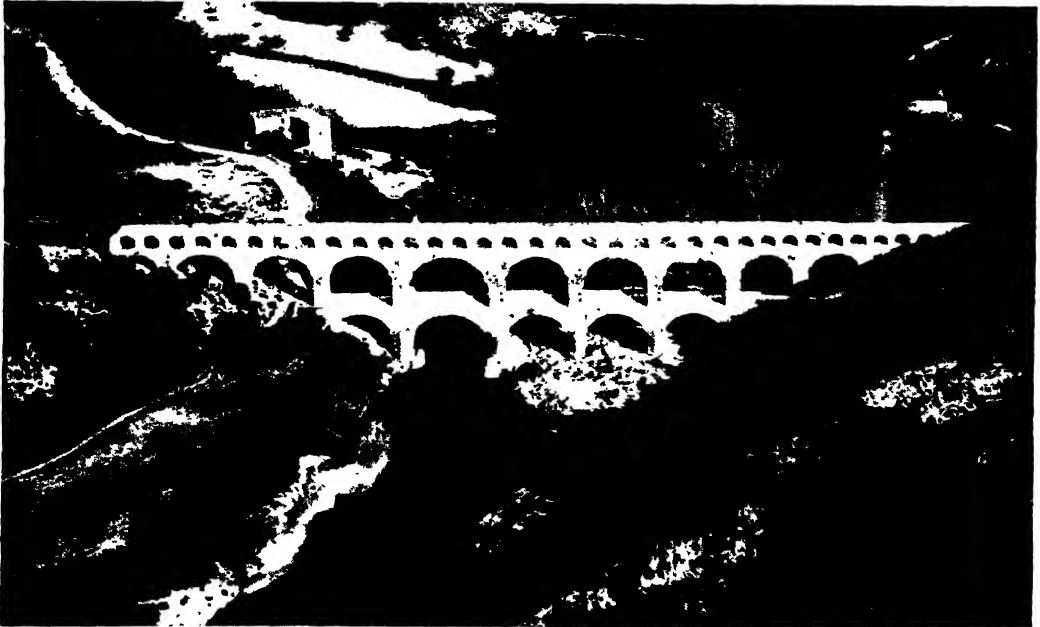
arch in the first and second tiers over 80 feet. The designer, who used so well this opportunity of giving visible expression to the power of Rome, may have been Agrippa, the statesman who inspired and directed so many public works under Augustus. He came to Gaul in 19 B.C. and laid out the four great roads radiating from Lyons. It was probably at this time that aqueducts were built to supply Nîmes and Lyons.

Nîmes did not wholly fulfil the expectations then formed of her future importance, but Lyons became one of the chief cities of the Empire and within the next two centuries three more aqueducts were built for her. Two of them are remarkable in including lengths of high-pressure conduit. Instead of crossing a valley on a lofty bridge of masonry the water passed from an open channel into a closed pipe, formed in one case of stone, in the other of lead.

It may be asked why so little use was made of pipes in Roman aqueducts. The

answer is that the Romans had no cast-iron pipes, that bronze was too costly, and that they were unable to make lead pipes of large bore that would stand the pressure. At Lyons the contents of a low-pressure channel measuring about 2 by 6 feet were transferred to ten lead pipes with a bore of 8 inches. At Rome the channels conveyed a much larger volume of water and a whole battery of parallel lead pipes would have been required. Moreover, the Roman water is heavily charged with lime and would soon have choked these small pipes. On the other hand, there was abundant material in the neighbourhood of Rome for constructing and lining the huge low-pressure channels of masonry; and man-holes at frequent intervals enabled workmen to reach any part for cleaning or repair.

Provincial aqueducts on the low-pressure system were numerous and sometimes of surprising length; that of Carthage is ninety-five miles long. In general their tunnelled underground sections are more



**SOLID YET GRACEFUL : THE 'PONT DU GARD' FROM THE AIR**

The conduit that supplied Nîmes (Nemausus) with water ran mostly underground, but where the valley of the Gard has to be crossed it is borne on an aqueduct, short compared with most others, but superb in its proportions and wonderfully preserved. The 'bridge' consists of three superimposed tiers of arches, the length of the topmost tier being 880 feet, its greatest height (from water-level) 160 feet and its width 10 feet. See also the photograph in page 2047.

*Photo, Compagnie aérienne française*

*Photo. B.M.C. 1928. No. 26.3.76*



#### EXAMPLES OF ROMAN PLUMBING

That the Romans knew the principles of hydraulics, and did not employ low-pressure aqueducts from ignorance, is shown by a high-pressure pipe-line crossing a valley at Lyons. And then there are the lead pipes that were to be found in almost every Roman private house, such as these from the House of Livia on the Palatine.

*Photo, Donald McLeish*

remarkable than their masonry above ground. The longest arcaded stretch in Gaul, part of the conduit supplying Metz, measured 1,225 yards, and had 118 arches. The highest, near Cahors, was in three tiers, and is said to have been 180 feet high.

Spain has two notable examples which are still in use. Segovia, a town of secondary importance in the mountains north-west of Madrid, was supplied by an aqueduct nearly eleven miles long which approached the citadel by a bridge of two tiers of granite arches (page 2046), restored by Queen Isabella in 1457. The aqueduct at Tarragona, capital of the eastern province, is twenty-two miles long and enters the town as a bridge of two tiers, finely proportioned and built as at Segovia of massive granite without mortar.

It was not until late in the nineteenth century that English cities began to construct aqueducts comparable with those of the Roman Empire. When it is remembered that the tunnels for these modern works are driven with the help of drilling machines and explosives and that iron pipes enable them to dispense with masonry bridges when crossing a valley, the achievements of ancient engineers do not suffer by comparison.

There was not much progress in technical skill. The Romans used simple instruments, invented by the Greeks, and did not improve upon them. They took levels with the aid of a long bench like a gigantic

carpenter's level in which water took the place of spirit. They worked by rule of thumb, and showed much ingenuity in correcting the results of miscalculation. Where, for instance, part of an aqueduct channel was found to have an excessive gradient, the flow was checked by the introduction of abrupt angles. By the end of the second century almost every city of the Empire had a water supply ample not only for domestic needs but for lavish use

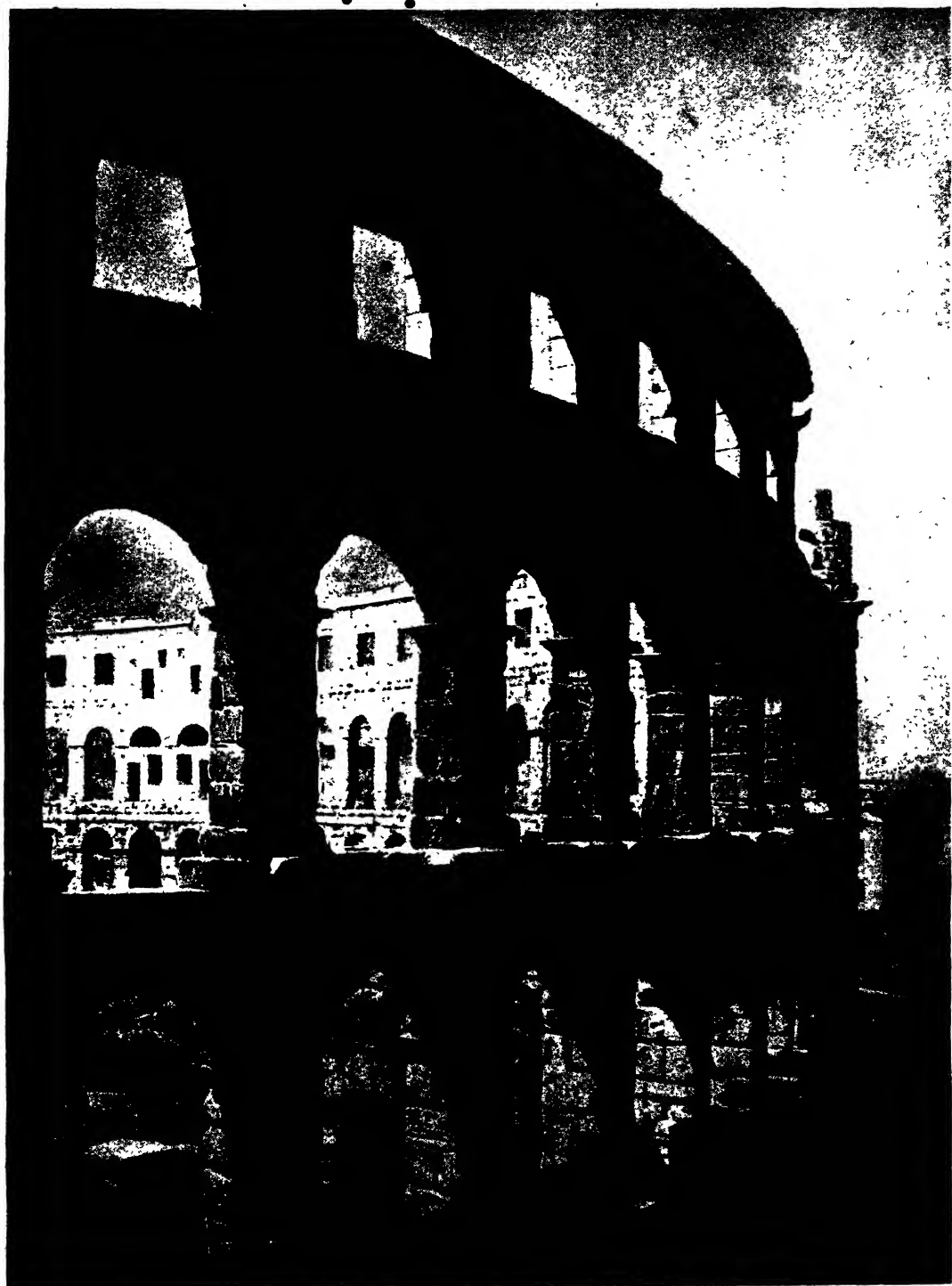
in public baths and fountains.

A vein of water brought into the town at enormous cost did not, as so often in northern Europe to-day, creep unseen into a reservoir hidden by high walls, but poured forth visibly in some public spot, offering to city folk the most refreshing of country sights and sounds. Before a background of niches or a recess suggesting a cave-sanctuary the water was made to spread and dance and glitter in the sun, a jewel for which the architectural ornament was but a setting.

These fountains, multiplied in infinite variety, were remote copies of natural springs. We find them in the grounds of country houses and temples, and on a great scale in Rome itself. Agrippa's Baths, the first public establishment of the kind (19 B.C.), looked out on a canal and lake set among green lawns and used, like the Serpentine in London, by hardy swimmers even at mid-winter. This was so much of a river that it took nearly a fifth of the water from the new aqueduct built by Agrippa to supply his Baths and park. Nero's Golden Palace had its lake, Hadrian's great country house at Tivoli its canal copied from a famous pleasure resort in Egypt. If nature had provided no water in the foreground, man supplied it.

Water power was used for grinding corn and sawing stone, and doubtless for other industrial purposes. One of the few

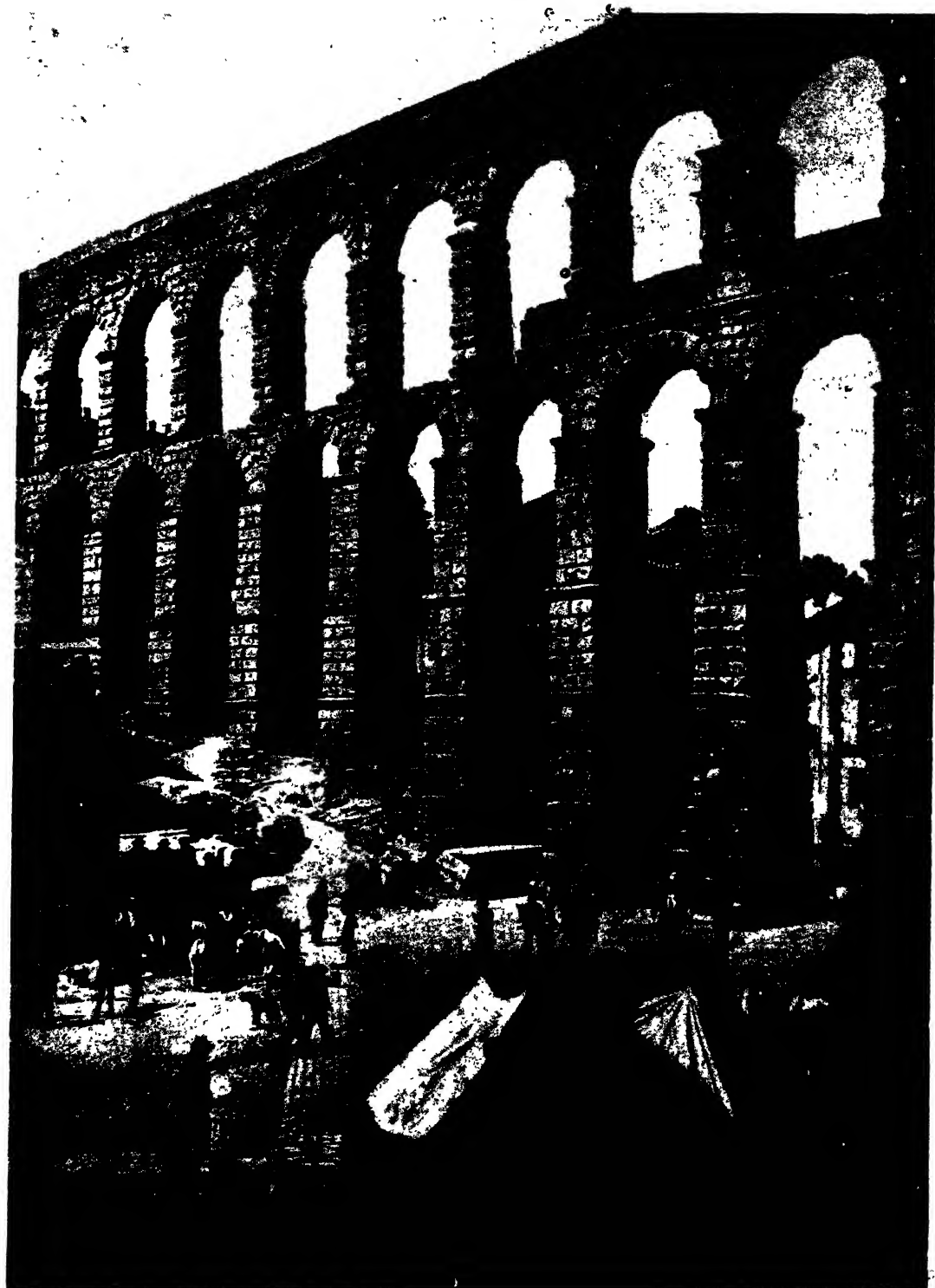
**Fountains in  
Roman towns**



#### GRACEFUL SHELL OF THE AMPHITHEATRE AT POLA

Few Roman amphitheatres are more pleasing than that of Pola at the head of the Adriatic—the outer shell, which is all that remains, has an airy lightness in spite of the huge size of its unmortared blocks. It was built late in imperial times, and adventitious Greek ornament is almost lacking.

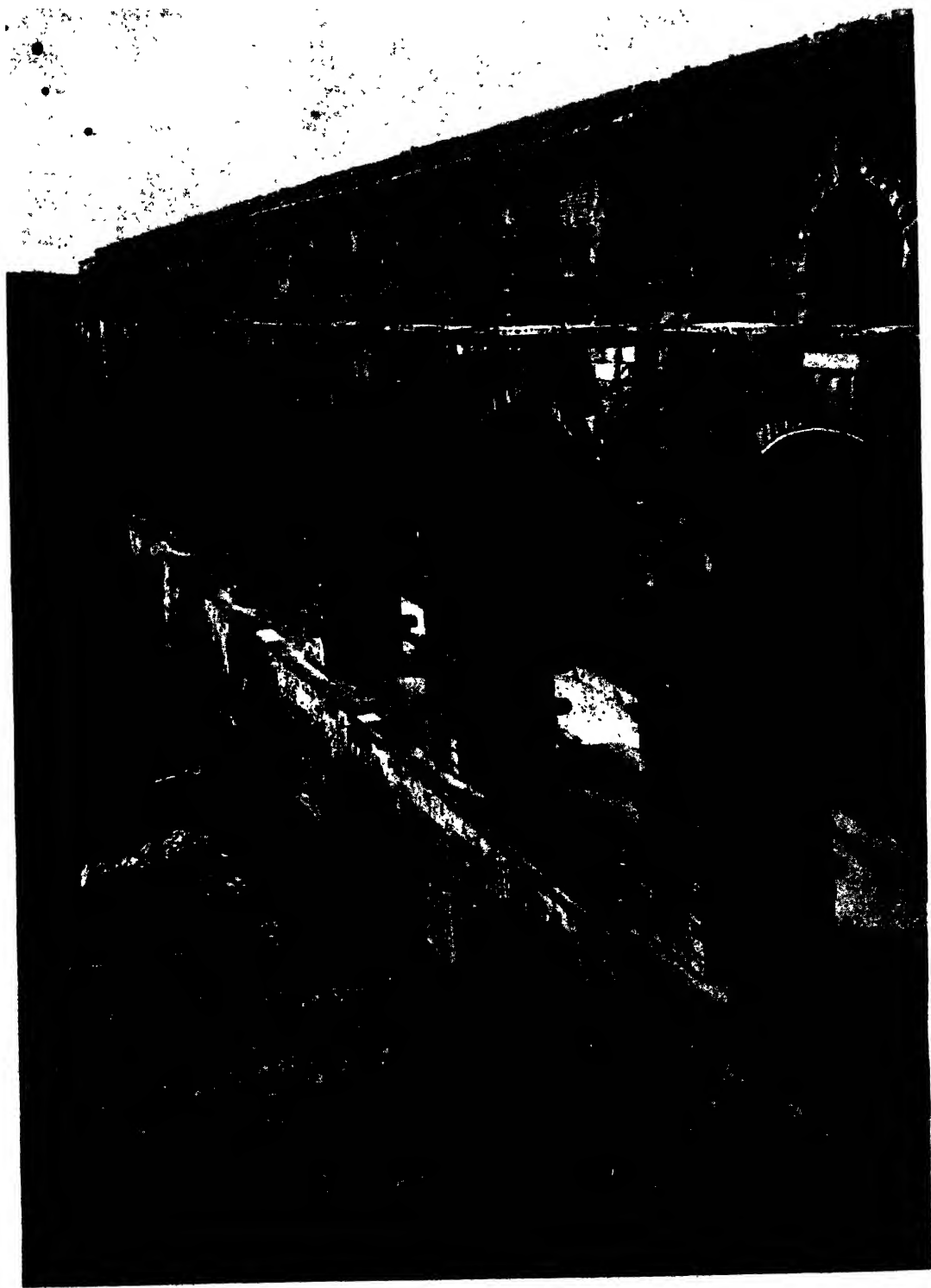
*Photo, E.N.A.*



**THE 'DEVIL'S BRIDGE': AN AQUEDUCT IN WHICH WATER STILL FLOWS**

This aqueduct still serves the purpose for which its Roman builders designed it, bringing water to Segovia from the Rio Frio more than ten miles away. Much of it is underground, but where it towers above the Spanish town on arches 130 feet high it is known as the Puente del Diablo:

*Photo, E.N.A.*



### **MASSIVE DIGNITY OF ROMAN AQUEDUCTS : THE PONT DU GARD**

An air photograph of the Pont du Gard, showing it as a whole, appears in page 2043 ; this nearer view brings out the massiveness of construction that has enabled it to stand for nearly a thousand years without the aid of mortar. The roadway to the right of it is a modern bridge.

*Photo, Ernest Peterffy*





**ROMAN BRIDGE THAT STILL BEARS TRAFFIC AFTER THE LAPSE OF EIGHTEEN HUNDRED YEARS**

The most perfect of Roman bridges, and one that is still in use, having been kept in good repair through the centuries, crosses the Tagus in Spain near Alcántara (Arabic, El Kantara, 'the bridge'). The central arches, with their 100-foot span, are more than 180 feet above the river and the whole structure is 617 feet long: it was built about A.D. 100 and the name of the architect, Gaius Julius Lacer, is recorded.

*Photo. J. Laurent, Madrid.*

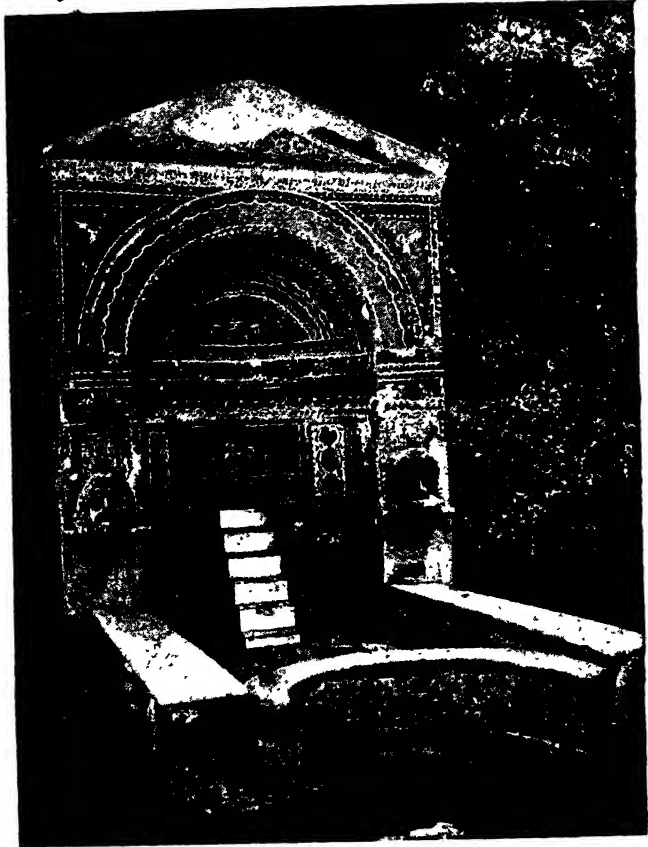
Roman aqueducts in Britain of which remains have been traced brought water to the gold-mines of Dolaucothy in Carmarthenshire.

The Roman world, like the modern world before the age of railways, depended on water also for the movement of merchandise in bulk. Since all great cities grew up near a sea-port or a navigable river, much attention was paid to harbour works and the regulation of rivers. At Rome the banks and channel of the Tiber were under the charge of commissioners, who maintained the river-walls and towing-paths, prevented encroachments, and took measures to guard the low-lying quarters from floods.

Long before the peoples of central Italy took to the sea, Greeks and Phoenicians had occupied most of the natural harbours of the Mediterranean, and begun to equip them with moles and quays; but they were not familiar with the hydraulic cement that was the especial contribution of Italian engineers.

The volcanic ash quarried around Vesuvius, and first used in the Campanian port of Puteoli, lent itself, as we have seen (page 2031), to the construction of piers under water with the help of caissons, and to the raising of quays above water level on a system of arches and vaults. Against winter storms, however, more solid barriers were needed, and after the reign of Augustus arcaded harbours were no longer built. Massive concrete masonry became the rule.

An artificial island serving as a break-water was first employed in the port of Ostia built by Claudius at the mouth of the Tiber. There lay in the docks at Puteoli a huge ship built in Caligula's reign for the transportation of a granite obelisk from Egypt, and preserved there as a curiosity. She was filled with concrete blocks, which were piled into towers



**A SHRINE OF THE NYMPHS AT POMPEII**

An excellent example of the sort of setting that the ancients provided for the water from their aqueducts, so poetically called 'nymphaeum,' has come to light at Pompeii. It stood in the court of a private house, and is still bright with the mosaics that its builders lavished on it some two millennia ago.

*Photo, Donald McLeish*

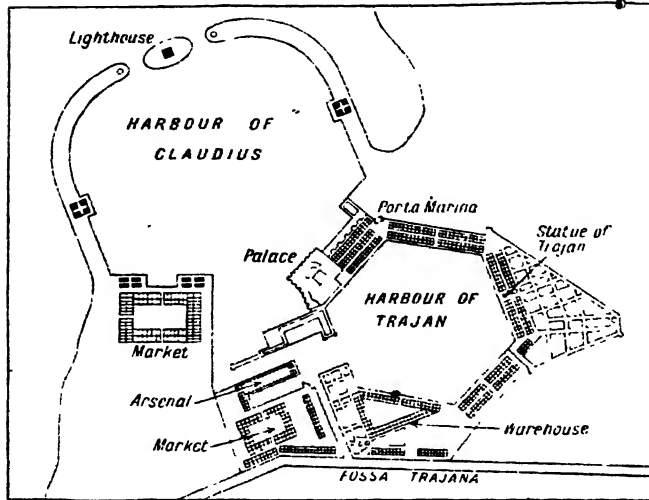
amidships and at bow and stern. Then this gigantic caisson was towed to Ostia and sunk to make a foundation for a lighthouse and other buildings. It was an ingenious device to overcome difficulties caused by the depth of water.

The harbour itself, an almost semi-circular basin enclosed by two curving moles, partly excavated within the shore line and partly enclosed from the open sea, was connected with Rome by a canal, more direct than the winding river, and a service of barges towed by oxen. Unfortunately the site was ill chosen, since it lies north of the Tiber mouth, and the prevailing currents carry the silt in that direction. The moles which once jutted out to sea are now divided from it by two miles of newly-formed land.

The next addition to the harbours of Rome was the inner basin constructed by Trajan. The great size of the Claudian harbour had proved a weakness, and in stormy weather its shelter was insufficient. A gale in A.D. 62 destroyed two hundred ships and their cargo of foodstuffs actually within it. Trajan decided to provide a safer and separate anchorage for the

of to-day on sea-marks and guiding lights. The Pharos of Alexandria (about 280 B.C.), with the exceptional height of 400 feet, since the coast-line was low and the harbour without natural features to distinguish it, served as a model for lighthouses throughout the ancient world (see reconstruction in page 1534). But, built for the most part where the coast-line was higher than at Alexandria, they did not rival it in height. In Italy they existed at Brindisi, Ravenna and Aquileia on the east coast, at Capri, Puteoli, Ostia on the west. Beside the naval port of Fréjus on the Riviera a Roman lighthouse stands to a height of 80 feet. At Corunna in the north-west of Spain a pharos 130 feet high, called the Tower of Hercules, was restored and refaced with granite in the eighteenth century, and carries a modern revolving light.

The emperor Caligula built a lighthouse at Boulogne in A.D. 44 to commemorate his intended invasion of Britain. The structure known as the Tour d'Ordre, which stood at Boulogne until the seventeenth century, was certainly Roman, but its banded masonry has



#### ARTIFICIAL HARBOUR-WORKS AT OSTIA

Ostia itself was little more than an open roadstead, but Claudius built an artificial harbour two miles to the north, connected with the Tiber by a canal. Even this was insecure, so Trajan added the hexagonal inner harbour. The artificial island between the moles was created by sinking a rock-filled ship.

*From Stuart-Jones, 'Companion to Roman History'*

corn-ships, thereby releasing quay space in the existing harbour for private traders. The new basin, excavated inland to the south-east of the Claudian harbour, is a symmetrical hexagon of which each side measures 1,200 feet. Its planning was masterly. The single entrance, 400 feet wide, faced south-west and was approached through a small intermediate basin which communicated both with the Claudian harbour and with the Rome canal. Along the quay, which was 40 feet wide, stone posts bearing numbers marked off the berths and facilitated mooring. A street at a higher level enclosed the quay, and outside this was a passage-way on which warehouses opened. The whole design has an architectural unity and symmetry rare in Roman engineering.

Ancient sailors, navigating without a compass, were more dependent than those

been thought to indicate a rebuilding after Caligula's time. It was a tapering octagonal tower of twelve storeys rising from a base 64 feet in diameter to a height of 200 feet, built of white stone, yellow stone and red brick in successive courses. Charlemagne restored it in 811 and had the light maintained. About 1640 the cliff on which it stood was undermined by quarrying and the tower fell, but its design is known from descriptions and sketches. On the opposite coast Dover had an octagonal lighthouse, still to be seen on the cliff east of the harbour, and there may have been a second on the west.

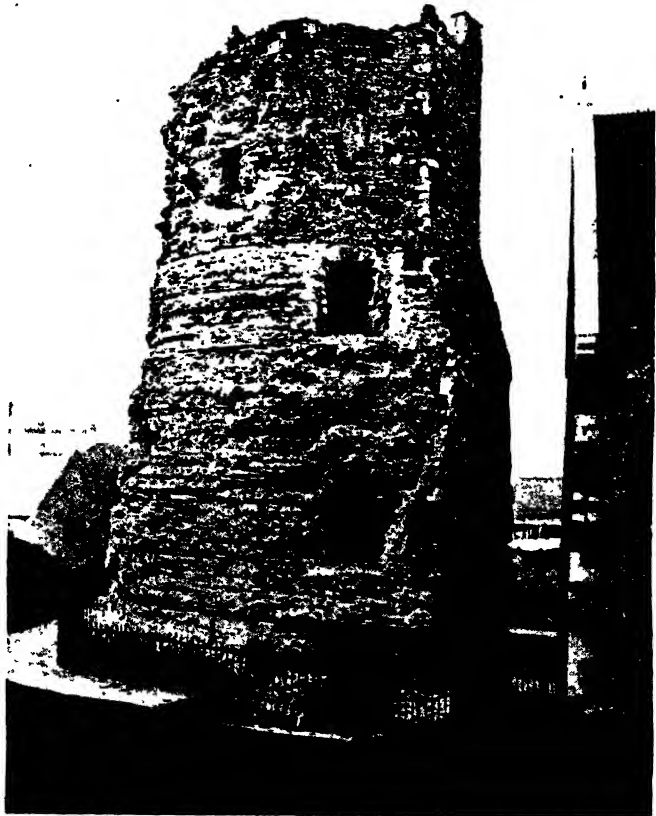
Although the ancients were so dependent on waterways they made no use of locks. Their canals were governed by the natural level of the sea or the rivers with which they were connected. But this must not blind us to the skill and judgement

shown in rectifying river mouths. Rivers that flow into the Mediterranean, having no tide to remove the silt that they bring down, quickly form a bar, flanked by lagoons which in time become marshes and eventually dry land. The ancients had no adequate means of dredging. The solution adopted was to cut a new river mouth at a point more or less free from the risk of silting. If Marius is still a popular hero in Provence, it is because the canal that he set his troops to cut in 102 B.C., as a new outlet for the Rhône, was a highway of commerce down to the end of the Roman Empire. Similar channels were made and maintained through the deltas of the Nile, the Po and other rivers.

The drainage system of Roman towns was far in advance of Greek practice. The site of Rome, originally a group of hilltop villages, included marshy valleys through which sluggish streams made their way to the Tiber. As the town spread downwards, these were embanked between massive walls. Tradition said that the principal channel, the Cloaca Maxima, was constructed in the time of the kings, and its walls may well be the work of Etruscan engineers. Its average height is 14 feet, its width 11 feet. Originally an open canal, it was afterwards vaulted over—perhaps as late as 150-100 B.C. Its zigzag course evidently corresponds with that of the original stream, rectified into a series of straight sections. The nymph who originally presided over it was still worshipped when the open brook had become a main sewer. Rising between the Oppian and Quirinal hills, it flowed under the Argiletum, crossed the Forum, and after two right-angled bends, traversed the old ox-market and entered the Tiber, where its mighty arched outlet is still visible. Rome had two other sewers comparable to this in

size, now buried thirty to forty feet below the modern streets.

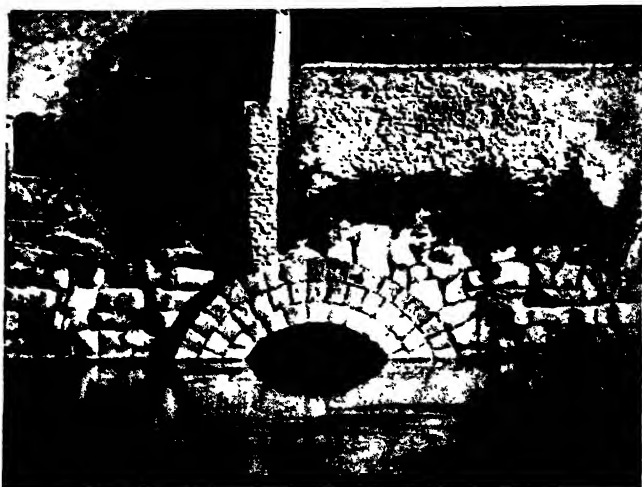
The ancients reckoned these tunnels, which are paved like streets and vaulted with blocks measuring as much as 45 cubic feet, among the chief wonders of Rome. They told how Agrippa, commissioned by Augustus to repair the sewers, had explored the whole system by boat. The elder Pliny dwells on the destructive forces which they had long defied, the volume of storm water pouring through them and battling underground with ascending floods from the Tiber, the shocks of earthquakes, and of falling buildings—the last a characteristic touch since the high tenement houses of Pliny's day were prone to collapse.



**ROMAN LIGHTHOUSE AT DOVER**

In the precincts of Dover Castle there stands an octagonal tower of which the lower courses at least, up to the level of the second arch, are Roman. Almost certainly it must have served as a lighthouse, like the similar tower at Boulogne that disappeared in the seventeenth century.

*Photo, Amos, Dover*



### OUTFALL OF THE CLOACA MAXIMA

On the left bank of the Tiber, south-west of the Forum, the exit of the Cloaca Maxima can still be seen, a triple-coursed arch half choked with mud and usually filled with water almost to the roof. It still functions as a drain, the lower reaches never having become disused.

*Photo, Alinari*

The cloacae received surface water as well as sewage from houses and public latrines—a combination contrary to modern sanitary rules, but common in European cities down to recent times. Presumably the abundant flow of water from public fountains and baths minimised the danger to health caused by effluvia rising through gullies in the streets; one of Agrippa's sanitary improvements was to use the surplus water from the aqueducts for flushing the sewers. Whatever their sanitary defects, the construction of the cloacae calls for admiration. They did their work until choked by neglect in the Middle Ages. The lower portion of the Cloaca Maxima has never been out of order, and its upper stretches were

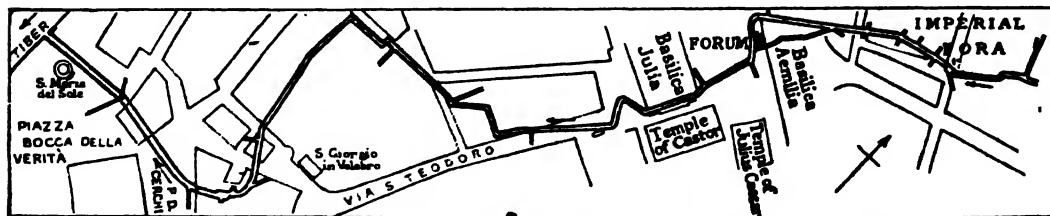
cleared and brought again into use in 1872 and 1889.

The canalisation of rivers flowing through towns was a common practice under the Empire. At Pergamum the river Selinus was roofed for 200 yards by two parallel barrel vaults, each 30 feet wide, and a Roman public building was erected across it. At Philadelphia (Ammân) the river that intersects the town was covered for a long distance by a vault 34 feet in the clear. The same thing was done at Petra to give space and dignity to the main street, which follows the windings of a deep ravine.

Sewers can be traced in many provincial cities, best perhaps at Trèves, where a complete network has been proved to

underlie the rectangular street plan. The main sewer of Arles, nearly 12 feet in height and width, challenges comparison with that of Rome. Even frontier forts had a well-planned system of underground drainage channels: at Housesteads on the Northumbrian Wall the latrines were placed at the lowest level, and there was a double provision for flushing them by surface water led to the spot in open channels and by larger discharges from storage tanks.

For public entertainments Rome adopted several types of building that had long been used in the Greek world; the open-air theatre for dramatic performances, the odeum or covered theatre for concerts, and the hippodrome (in Latin,



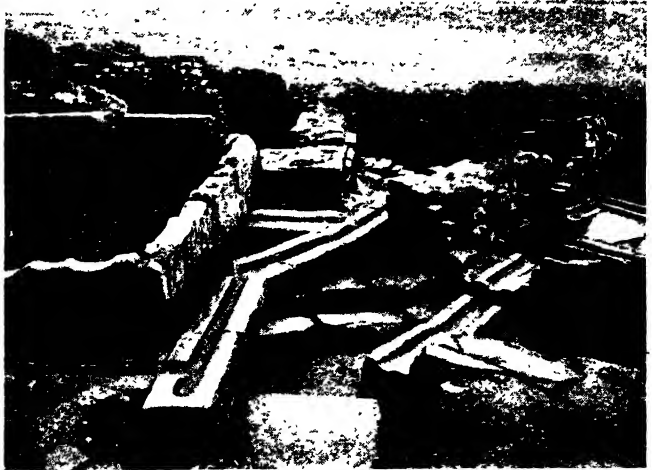
### COURSE OF ROME'S EARLIEST AND MOST USEFUL PUBLIC WORK

Rome was served by an elaborate system of sewers, of which the most famous is the Cloaca Maxima. Tradition says that it was built under the Kings to drain the low-lying district of the Forum, and this may well be so as far as the side walls are concerned; probably, however, it was not vaulted over until much later, having originally been an open gully.

*After 'Antike Denkmäler'*

'circus') for chariot racing. The stadium for foot-races and what we call 'track athletics' was introduced at Rome, but was not a prominent feature in other cities. To these was added a new type, which was built in greater numbers and has left more conspicuous ruins, the amphitheatre for combats of gladiators and shows of wild beasts.

The traditions of the Great Race-course at Rome went back to the days of Tarquin. The Romans copied the Greek hippodrome, which was used for a variety of riding and driving contests, chose the most sensational of them, the race for four-horse chariots, and elaborated it into a national sport. In the course of centuries this race-course in the hollow between the Palatine and Aventine hills was enlarged until it seated 180,000. It was at first a timber structure, and even after Trajan's rebuilding (A.D. 104) the upper galleries were



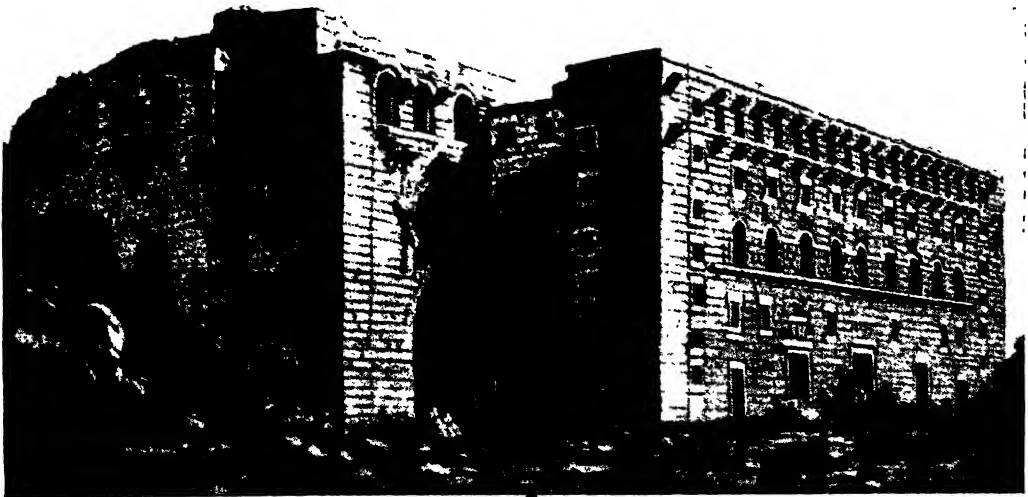
#### SANITATION IN A MILITARY POST

The Roman genius for sanitation was carried throughout the Empire. This excavation of the fort at Housesteads on Hadrian's Wall shows the latrines (right), which were flushed by surface water conducted along the open stone channels, and also by a discharge from the storage tank on the left.

*Photo, F. Gerald Simpson*

still of wood; we hear of more than one collapse which cost thousands of lives.

Of the other buildings, open and covered theatres are frequently found side by side.

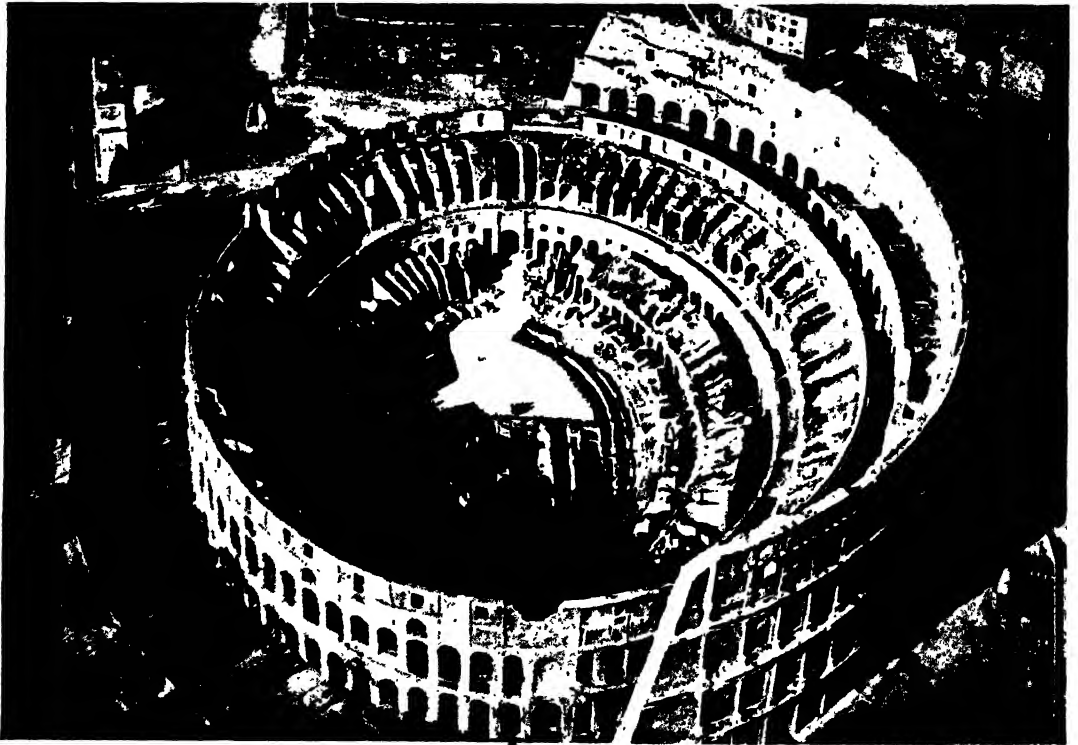
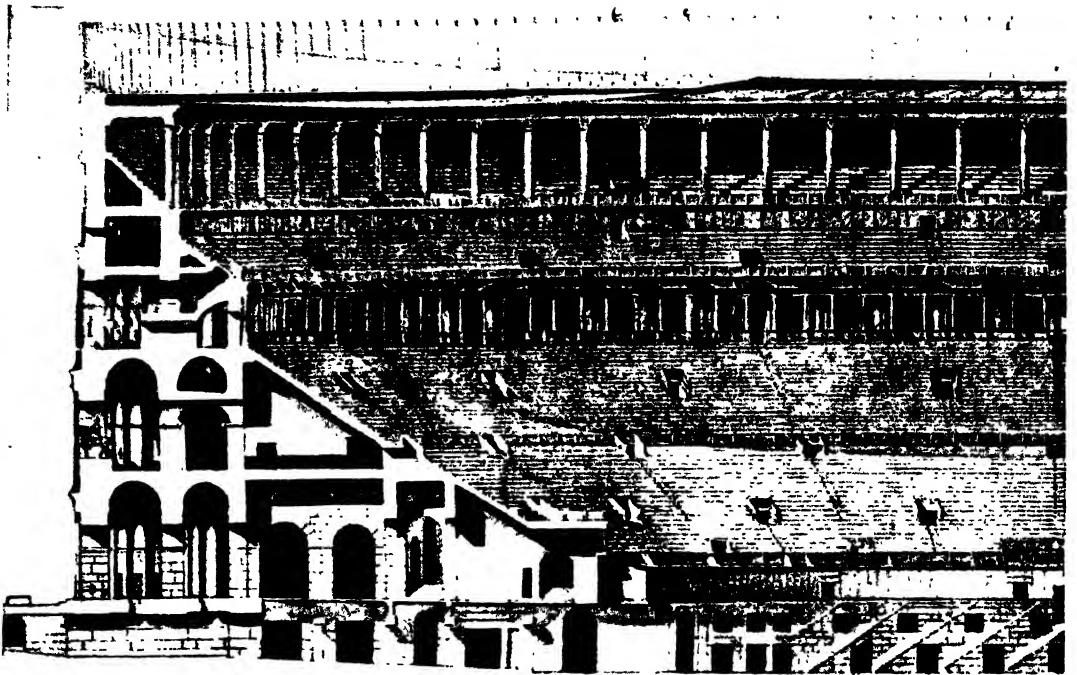


#### THE THEATRE IN ROMAN DAYS: SPLENDID RUIN AT ASPENDUS

Rome itself was never a flourishing seat of the drama, but some of the finest theatres in the provinces took shape in Roman times. Many were built up from level ground, like the amphitheatres; but that at Aspendus in Asia Minor follows the old Greek plan of being recessed into the side of a hill. The massive back wall of the stage, however, which we see in the photograph above, is typical of the

Roman theatre and quite un-Greek (see also pages 2026-27).

*From H. Bieber, 'Theaterwesen.'*

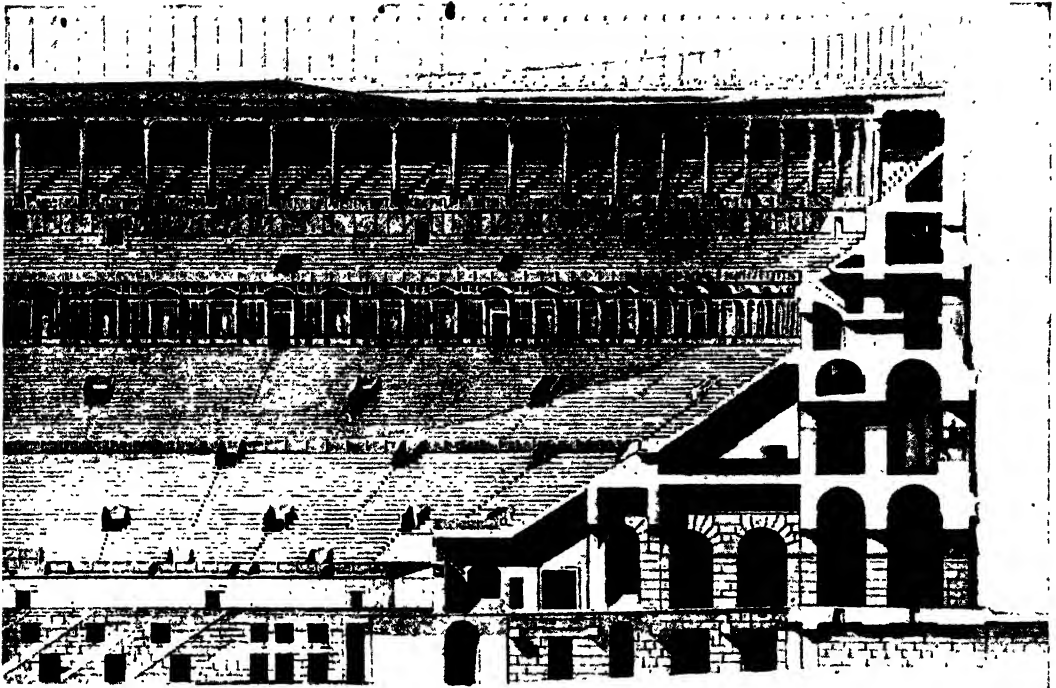


#### VAST COMPLEXITIES OF THE FLAVIAN AMPHITHEATRE AT ROME

There had been earlier wooden amphitheatres at Rome, and the stone-built amphitheatre at Pompeii is believed to date from 75 B.C., but the mighty Colosseum begun by Vespasian in A.D. 72 was really the parent of all the many similar structures that arose throughout the Empire. The reconstruction across the top of the page—a sectional elevation—shows its internal details: the arena with its substructure for stage machinery, etc., the tiers of seats, and the masts whence an awning was suspended.

*Reconstruction after Louis Duc, from 'Monuments Antiques';—*



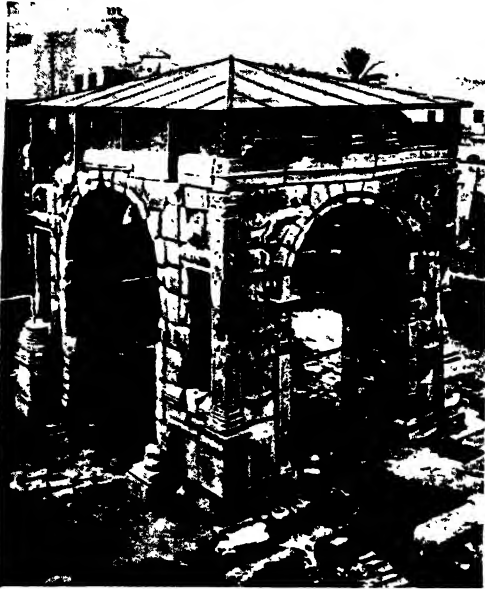


**—AND ONE OF THE MANY COPIES THAT AROSE IN THE PROVINCES**

The Flavian Amphitheatre has its more popular name of Colosseum from the colossal statue of Nero that stood hard by. The air-view at the bottom of the left-hand page shows its present ruinous condition—due not so much to the passage of time as to the depredations of medieval builders who used it as a quarry; in its prime it measured 615 by 510 feet. Immediately above is one of the daughter amphitheatres which adorned the provinces—that at El Djem in Tunisia, 488 by 406 feet.

—Air photo, 'L'Illustration'; photo on right, Jacques Boyer





#### TO ADORN A STREET

A feature of Roman town planning was the use of monumental arches to relieve the vista of straight streets: either as gateways, or else in the 'tetrapylon' form where two streets crossed, as here at Tripoli (temp. Marcus Aurelius)

Many Greek and Hellenistic theatres remained in use, but some of the finest examples in Greek lands were first built in the Roman period. The beautiful theatre

of Aspendus in Pamphylia was built from the bequest of a wealthy citizen in the time of Marcus Aurelius. It is hollowed out of the hill-side in Greek fashion, whereas theatres in the West were often on level ground and supported by arcades.

In early times gladiators and wild beasts were exhibited in the circus, and the memory of this custom survived in the name *ludi circenses*, 'circus games,' which included all such shows. For these entertainments of purely Italian origin there was evolved a new type of building, first of wood, then a shell of masonry with wooden seats, finally of stone throughout. Pleasure-loving Campania showed the way; the little town of Pompeii, refounded as a colony by Sulla in 80 B.C., was provided then, or soon after, with a stone amphitheatre (see page 1814). At Rome a similar building was constructed by a friend of Augustus in 29 B.C., and lasted until the Great Fire, A.D. 64. The passion for such shows was now deep-rooted and Vespasian won popularity by demolishing Nero's Golden Palace and erecting on its site the gigantic Flavian Amphitheatre, afterwards nicknamed the Colosseum.

The building itself and the paved area in which it stood were elliptical. The arena



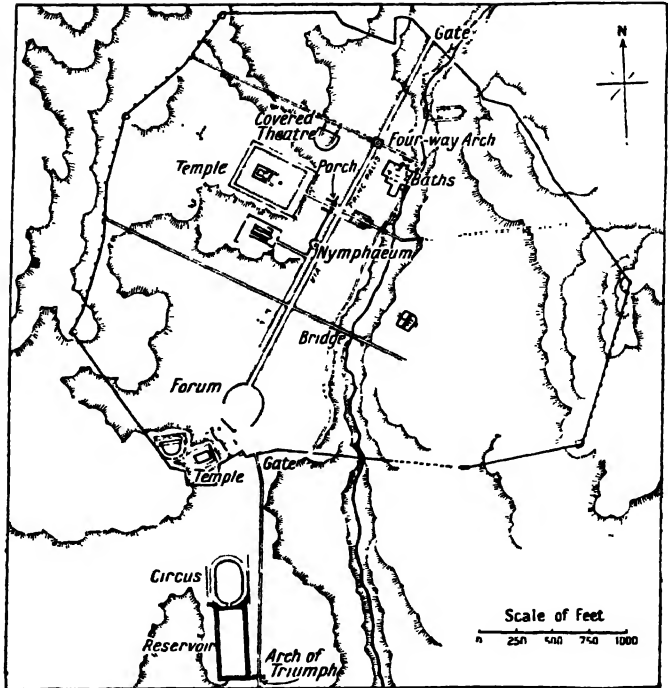
#### ARCHITECTURAL SPLENDOUR IN A ROMANISED CITY OF THE ORIENT

Vista planning was practised in the Graeco-Roman towns of the East, whereas the Western architects preferred long, straight perspectives running out to the open country. In Gerasa, the modern Jerash, a Palestinian city remodelled and thoroughly Romanised during the first two centuries of our era, the vista of the column-lined 'platea' or broadway was closed by the splendid colonnades of the Forum, of whose appearance some idea can be had from these ruins.

*Photo, Palestine Exploration Fund*

measured 282 feet by 177 feet, the whole building 615 feet by 512 feet. The height of its outer face was 159 feet, divided into four storeys, of which all but the topmost were composed of open arcades, eighty in number on each tier. Within the arcades are corridors from which staircases lead to all parts of the interior. The principal ranges of seats were of marble, long since stripped away, the uppermost of wood. Subways and shafts beneath the arena facilitated the production of all kinds of scenic effects. Cages containing wild beasts could be wheeled through these passages to any part of the arena and hoisted through a trap-door. In the amphitheatre of Puteoli, where the basement of the arena has been carefully excavated, there were forty-six such trap-doors and two tiers of small chambers in which caged animals were kept ready.

For the days of public games enthusiasts came long distances, hence provincial amphitheatres, mostly accessible by sea or river, were built to serve a district, not a single city. The largest of them, those at Carthage, Pola, Puteoli, Tarraco in Spain, Corinth and Cyzicus, were



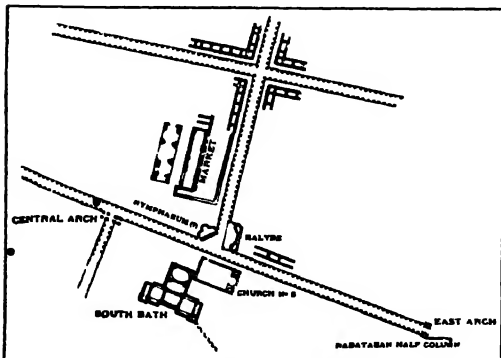
VISTA PLANNING OF AN EASTERN TOWN

This plan of Jerash shows more clearly than the photograph opposite how the long 'plateau' led to the oval-shaped Forum; and, in general, how the vistas of a rectangular site were closed by temples, gates, arches and 'nymphaea.'

After Professor Bosanquet in 'Town Planning Review'

at seaports. An exception is the great amphitheatre of El-Djem which stands inland in a fertile district south of Carthage. Thysdrus, the town it served, was not a large one; clearly the spectators came from towns and villages round about, camping in the olive groves or staying with friends for the days of the festival.

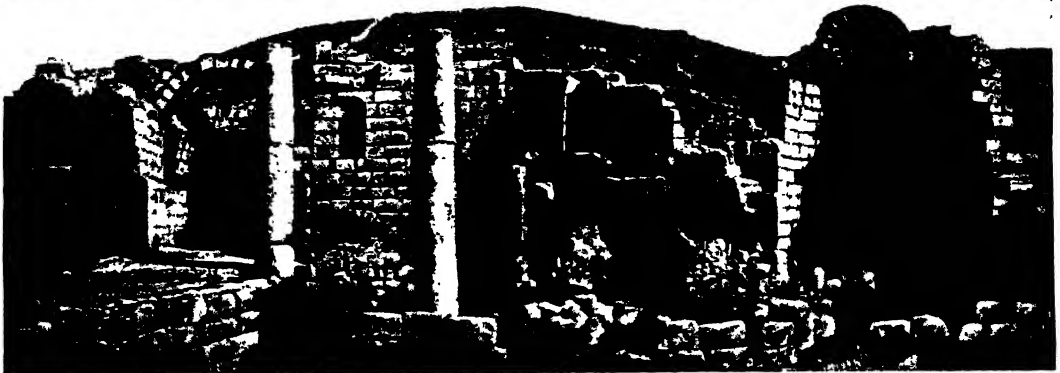
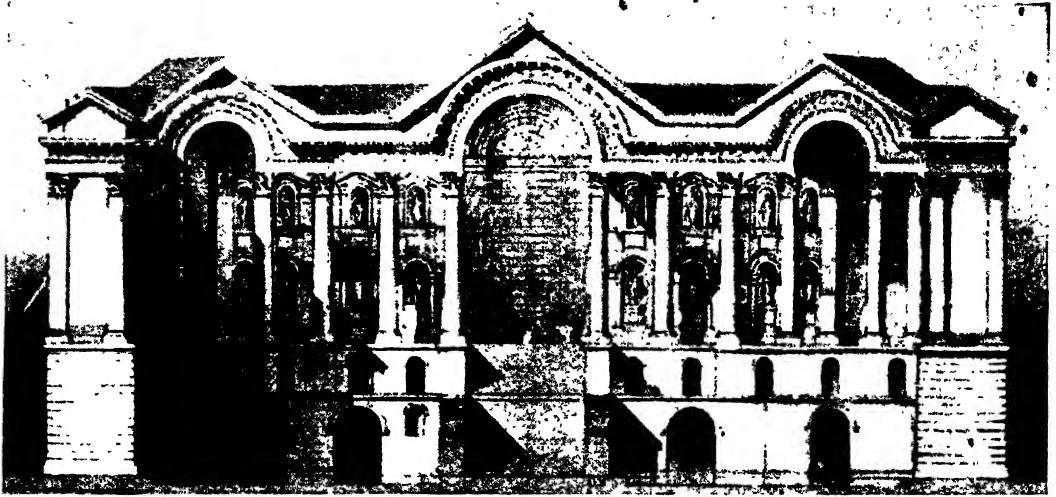
New cities in the West were laid out on a rigid plan, with a rectangular network of streets enclosing blocks of uniform size. One or more main streets traversing the town in either direction were bordered by covered walks which gave protection against sun and rain. The centre of civic life was the Forum, a spacious piazza which adjoined a main street but was not crossed by any thoroughfare. About it were grouped the principal temples, the basilica or public hall, serving both as law court and place for meetings, the offices of local magistrates and perhaps a public library. Such part of the square as was not flanked by these buildings was enclosed by colonnades, often two-storeyed,



PLAN OF AN IMPERIAL COLONY

Even street corners received the attention of the architect, as the 'nymphaeum' in this plan of Bostra in Syria shows; it varied the rectangular monotony, as well as avoiding a 'blind turn' in the modern manner.

From Butler, 'Princeton University Expedition to Syria'



#### TYPE OF THE FOUNTAINS THAT BEAUTIFIED GRAECO-ROMAN CITIES

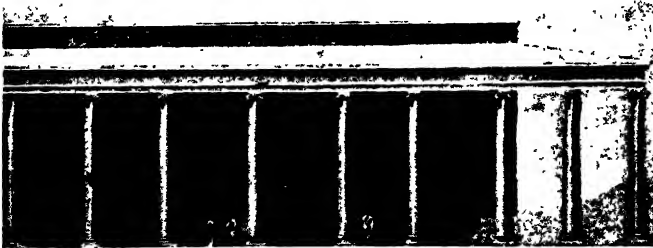
A nymphaeum was an ornamental fountain, built as a shrine of the nymphs and indeed often imitating a natural cave. Great use was made of such structures in vista planning; one at Bostra is shown in the plan in the preceding page, while this is an imposing example at Philadelphia (modern Amman, Biblical Rabbath-Ammon). The elevation above does not bring out its semicircular shape.

*From Butler, Princeton University Expedition to Syria*

with shops or offices in the shade behind them. The Forum in earlier days had been a market. In the imperial age it was increasingly devoted to politics, law and finance, and quarters were found elsewhere

for retail traders. Provision dealers were housed in a separate market hall, called the Macellum, which often took the form of a courtyard surrounded by covered shops with a picturesque fountain in the centre, around which the fish-mongers had their stalls. Other trades congregated in special streets, as in Eastern bazaars to-day.

The monotonous lines of the straight streets were further relieved by monumental arches placed sometimes at the entrance to the town, sometimes at the intersection of two main streets. In the latter case the monument became a fourway arch, or tetrapylon, adorned on each face with



#### GRATEFUL SHADE FOR SHOPPERS

Bostra was made a colonia under Trajan and no doubt received the beautifications that make its ruins so impressive at the same time. This line of colonnaded shop fronts is reconstructed from remains close to the north-west angle where two streets intersect at the top of the plan in the preceding page.

*From Butler, Princeton University Expedition to Syria*

a screen of columns and enriched with sculpture. The arch served as a pedestal for statues, sometimes for a colossal group representing an emperor driving a four-horse chariot. Vista planning, the laying out of a main street so that the view along it was closed by a temple, theatre, fountain-façade or monumental tomb, was effectively employed at Gerasa and other cities of the eastern provinces. Architects in the west put convenience before aesthetic effect, and liked their main streets to run without interruption into the open.

In the Near East Rome was the successor of older empires. The Persians had laid out roads, the Macedonians had planted new cities as regular in design as the new Roman foundations, yet when we examine their remains we find that Roman work predominates. The regular planning of Antioch, the capital of Syria, may have been the work of Greek rulers, but it gained in extent and magnificence under Roman rule. The marble pavement and colonnades of its main boulevard were the gift of Herod the Great, a despotic ruler who knew how to amass wealth by

ruthless exploitation of his subjects and to spend it on magnificent buildings. The splendour of his new temple at Jerusalem was equalled by that of his palace which stood beside it, raised on substructures like those which wealthy Romans loved to build. His liberality, extended to many cities outside Palestine, set an example for others. When Agrippa visited Jerusalem and travelled through the eastern provinces in Herod's company, each of these great builders must have learned from and stimulated the other.

Jerusalem lacked a port. Herod created a well equipped artificial harbour and a city beside it which he named Caesarea in honour of Augustus. Unlike the older



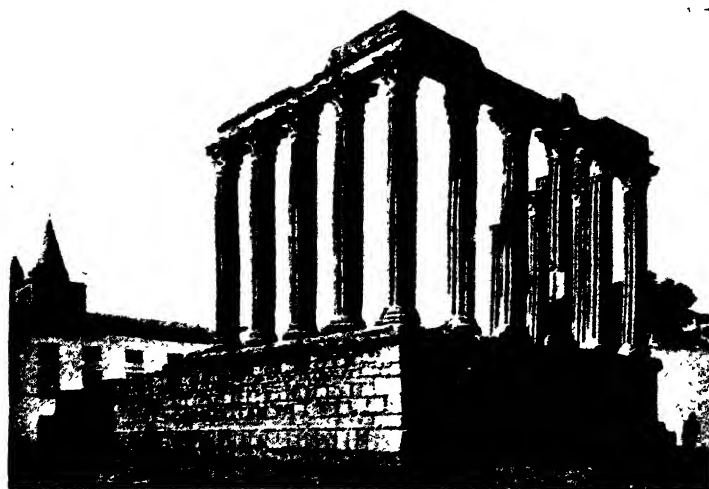
ARCHED GATEWAY THAT IS A RELIC OF THE DAMASCUS OF ROMAN DAYS

Cities of the East under the Empire became adorned with the typical features of Roman or Graeco-Roman town planning. Above is a view of the east gate of Damascus as it is to-day, with a reconstruction drawing executed by German surveyors during the occupation of the city in the Great War. In the reconstruction, which shows the inner face of the gate, notice the broad side-walks and narrow roadway; in Roman towns no wheeled traffic was allowed in the daytime.

*From Wattinger, 'Damascus'*

Hellenistic foundations it had an aqueduct and a system of sewers, in which we detect Roman influence. He rebuilt Samaria, naming it too after Augustus, and did much to beautify other towns of Palestine and Syria by the erection of town halls, theatres, race-courses and porticoes. It was in his day that the broadway ('platea'), a striking feature of Alexandria, was copied in other eastern cities, whence the fashion spread throughout the Empire.

In towns where the market-place, hemmed in by historic buildings and crowded with memorials, was too small for the busy life of the new age, the making or widening of arterial main streets relieved the congestion, for business was transferred to shops and offices in the new colonnades. An axial system of broadways was created even in old cities such as Damascus, Bostra and Jerusalem. What we call a 'place' or 'piazza'—both words are derived from the Greek 'platea'—was a square or round expansion of the street at a busy spot where it crossed another or approached a city gate or a port. Great squares still appear on the plan, but they were temple courts, forming an architectural whole with the temple which they enclosed, not designed as market places, though business tended to invade them.



MEMORIAL OF THE ROMANS IN PORTUGAL

As a final caution that the building skill of the Romans was not entirely devoted to utilitarian ends we may remind ourselves of the architectural gems that yet stand, principally in Asia Minor and Africa (see especially page 1982); though a few, such as this temple at Évora in Portugal, have survived the destructive spirit of Europe.

Photo, E.N.A.

The abundance of Roman remains in Asia Minor, Syria and North Africa does not prove that they were more populous than the European provinces, where visible remains are few. The contrast is explained by the history of the two areas. Peace and industry, the incessant building and rebuilding that go with them, are more destructive than war and barbarism. Here and there in Europe a jewel of architecture, the Maison Carrée at Nîmes, for example, or the temple with fluted granite columns at Évora in Portugal, has escaped the forces of progress. But in Africa and Asia the abiding desolation caused by Moslem conquest has embalmed whole towns and countrysides. The Arabs purloined columns and capitals for their mosques—one at Kairwan alone contains over four hundred shafts of marble and granite and porphyry from Roman towns on the coast—but spared a multitude of arches, temples and monumental tombs, as well as the waterworks and farmhouses that show the former extent of cultivation. In Asia Minor, though the Turkish peasant is a more industrious farmer and builder than the Arab, centuries of quarrying and lime-burning have only mutilated, not destroyed, the ancient monuments.

The decay of public works did not mean total loss of all that Rome had taught. The handicrafts lived on, and with them the better tools that the free intercourse of the Empire had diffused to its farthest bounds. Not only in the Romance languages but in Welsh, Flemish and German the vocabulary of the building arts is largely Latin. The traveller may still notice a contrast between the old Roman territory on the left bank of the Rhine and the barbarian districts on the right: on one side straight roads and rectangular fields with compact stone villages; on the other, winding roads, irregular enclosures and straggling half-timbered houses.

# LATER GREEK SCIENCE

The last Contributions of Hellenic Genius to Original Thought before the Onset of the Dark Ages

By CHARLES SINGER

Lecturer in History of Medicine in the University of London; Author of Greek Biology and Greek Medicine, etc.

THE Athenian scientific school virtually ended with the generation after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. The great conqueror was an ardent friend of science, and his attitude reacted upon the Athenian school, of which Theophrastus, so far as science is concerned, was a belated representative. When Alexander died, his Empire broke up. The different parts of it were seized by his generals. Egypt fell to Ptolemy I Soter, who founded a dynasty, known as the Ptolemaic, that reigned nearly three hundred years. These Ptolemaic sovereigns were an exceedingly able and intelligent group of men and women who took much interest in science. The first of the line established the tradition of learning and the second founded a library and museum at Alexandria (see Chap. 79). This city now became the centre of the scientific world. Learned men flocked to it and were supported by funds provided by the Ptolemaic rulers.

The School at Alexandria continued until A.D. 640, when the city was taken by the Arabs. About 100 B.C., however, it had begun to languish, and by A.D. 200 was in full decay. Nevertheless, the scientific spirit at Alexandria showed spasmodic activity as late as A.D. 400; but from then, for the last two and a half centuries of its existence, it may be described as moribund. The story of the Mahomedan invaders having burnt the Library may be dismissed as mythical. Not only is the story of very late origin and unsupported by evidence, but also it is certain that by the time the Arabs took Alexandria little scientific literature had survived centuries of neglect and the repeated religious riots that marked the close of Christian dominion in Egypt.

The Alexandrian Library in its earlier stages had a number of distinguished curators, of whom the first, summoned thither by Ptolemy, was Demetrius of Phaleron, who had been trained at Athens. Most of his successors were literary men, but a few, such as Eratosthenes and Apollonius, were also scientists.

From 300 B.C. to A.D. 200, when ancient science fell into decay, most distinguished scientists were either

teachers or pupils at Alexandria. There are some, of whom Archimedes was the most remarkable, who do not seem to have studied or taught at Alexandria. Yet even Archimedes corresponded with members of the school, and may be regarded as one of its products. Later Greek science is, therefore, sometimes described as Alexandrian science.

It is characteristic of the Alexandrian age that science was developed along the lines of 'specialities.' These were less related to each other and to the general philosophic thought than in the previous period, when the lead in scientific thought came from Athens. Therefore, in considering these later scientific developments of antiquity, it will often be more convenient to discuss rather the subjects treated than the school from which the various advances emanate. Thus, even in the first generation at Alexandria, there were such entirely dissociated activities as the mathematical works of Euclid on the one hand and the biological investigations of Herophilus and Erasistratus on the other.

Among the first to be called to the Alexandrian Academy was the illustrious mathematician who bore the name of Euclid. We know next to nothing of his



#### FOUNDER OF ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY

Although it was his son who perhaps did most to establish its pre-eminent position, it was almost certainly Ptolemy I, surnamed Soter, the first Macedonian monarch of Egypt (323-285 B.C.), who actually founded the library at Alexandria

*The Louvre*

personality. He was probably trained at Athens by a pupil of Plato; and he is said to have been an unpretending man of gentle temper. A saying is ascribed to him that must appeal to many a mathematical student. Asked by King Ptolemy whether there were no easier way of learning geometry than by ploughing through his *Elements*, the mathematician answered: 'Sire, to Geometry there is no royal road.' When a stupid student inquired, 'What shall I gain by learning these things?' Euclid said to a servant: 'Hand this fellow a penny, since he must needs make profit from his studies.'

Though we know little of Euclid the man, yet his work, *The Elements of Geometry*, has come down to us intact and has very largely determined all subsequent mathematical teaching. It is probable that no work save the Bible has been so much studied. For the past twenty-two centuries parts of *The Elements*, and especially the first six of the thirteen books, have been used as an introduction to geometry. Even though it is now superseded, the newer forms of geometrical

teaching are demonstrably based on the work of the Alexandrian mathematician.

The question has often been raised, to what extent is Euclid's *Elements* original or a compilation? It is a difficult question to answer, since fragments only of earlier geometrical writers have come down to us. We have seen something in Chapter 48 of a few of the mathematical discoveries before his time, and, moreover, elementary works had already been written by other authors, as, for instance, by Hippocrates of Chios (see page 1478).

Before Euclid it had been generally agreed to restrict the discussion of plane geometry to the straight line and the circle. The properties of the right-angled triangle and the doctrine of proportion for both commensurables and incommensurables, as we have seen (page 1473), had already been investigated. Some of the properties of the conic sections were known, as were also the five possible regular solid figures, that is to say figures with equal sides and equal angles, which are sometimes called the 'Platonic bodies.' The solution of such problems in solid geometry as the relation between the volume of a cone or pyramid and that of the prism or cylinder circumscribed around it had been attained. Despite such discoveries and the systematic exposition of them, and despite the great mathematical activity that they imply, there can be no doubt that Euclid achieved great advances. His treatise displaced all that had gone before it and rapidly attained the position which it has since held.

#### Euclid's advances in Plane Geometry

Euclid was a voluminous writer, and his name was attached to many other works besides *The Elements of Geometry*. Some of these are still perfect, others are lost, others survive in Arabic translation or in interpolated or corrupted texts. Among those that are lost we should particularly like to have his work, *On Fallacies*, which dealt with the causes of error in geometrical research. Other of his works dealt with astronomy, optics and music, and of some of them we shall speak later.

Among the mathematical achievements of Euclid we may specially refer to his attempts to express areas bounded by



curved lines in terms of figures bounded by straight lines. The simplest expression of this attempt is called 'squaring the circle,' a problem to which he gave great attention. The importance of these essays

will be understood when Euclid's work on it is realized that they curvilinear figures represent the first application of the idea of 'limits.' This idea forms the basis of mathematical development from Kepler (1571-1630) onwards. It is, of course, implicit in the doctrine of the 'calculus,' as developed by Newton and Leibniz (1646-1716), which is, in its turn, the starting point in the development of modern mathematical research.

The principle of the doctrine of limits can be placed before the reader in a very simple form. A regular six-sided figure can be built up from six equilateral triangles. Such a figure can be inscribed within a circle by the simple application of the first proposition of the first book of Euclid (see annexed diagram).

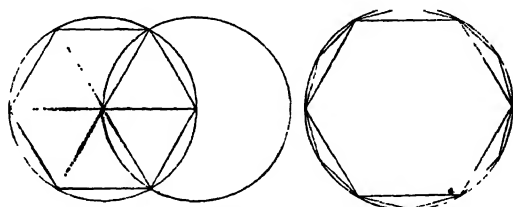
Now it is obvious (a) that the sum of the six sides of this hexagon is less than the circumference of the circle within which it is inscribed; and (b) that the area of this hexagon is less than the area of the circle. Moreover, it is evident that the difference is considerable in each case. If we double the number of sides and make it a twelve-sided figure, as we may easily do, then the statements (a) and (b) will still be true, but the difference will now be in each instance smaller. Moreover, we can go on doubling the number of sides to 24, 48, 96, 192, or to any higher number to an unlimited extent. The more we increase the number of sides, the more nearly will the inscribed figure come to the circle, so that 'in the limit,' when its sides are so small as to be no more than points, it may be conceived of as becoming the circle. Euclid clearly realized that this limit can never actually be reached but that it can be approached as nearly as we wish.

Aristarchus of Samos (about 310-230 B.C.) has been called the 'Copernicus of Antiquity.' He extended the view of Heracleides that the Earth rotates about its own axis (see page 1481) by maintaining that the Sun itself is at rest and that

not only Mercury and Venus but that also all the other planets, of which the Earth is one, revolve in circles round the Sun. It is interesting to observe that this view of Aristarchus brought on him the charge of impiety. The hypothesis thus caused in the ancient world a similar, though much milder, outburst to that produced two thousand years later by the writings of Copernicus (1473-1543), Giordano Bruno (c. 1540-1600), Galileo (1564-1642) and Kepler (1571-1630).

In addition to this doctrine we owe to Aristarchus the first scientific attempt to measure the relative distances of the Sun and Moon from the Earth and their sizes relative to each other. It is easy to understand the principle of these investigations.

Aristarchus knew that the light of the Moon is reflected from the Sun. It therefore occurred to him that when the Moon is exactly at the half, the line of vision from Earth to Moon must be at right angles to the line of light passing from Sun to Moon (see diagram in page 2064).



EUCLID'S DOCTRINE OF LIMITS

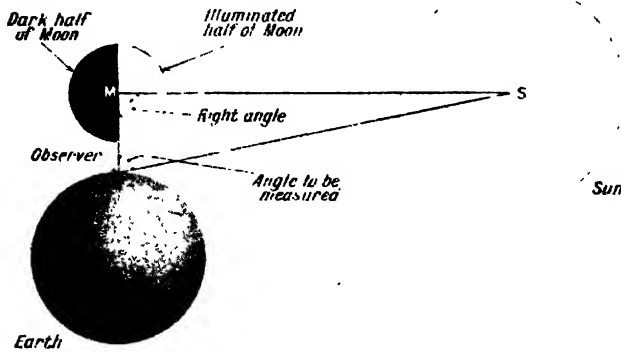
A hexagon, inscribed within a circle by the method on the left, will be smaller in area and perimeter. But if the number of sides are doubled (right) the difference will be less. By doubling 'ad infinitum' the inscribed figure will ultimately approximate to the circle.

Therefore, at this moment of half moon, the lines joining the observer O on the Earth to the centres S of the Sun and M of the Moon must form a right-angled triangle, OSM, of which the angle at M is a right angle. Now the angle at O can be measured by actual observation. With a knowledge of the two angles at M and O, it was easy to determine the relative lengths of the sides OS and OM, that is to say the relative distances of sun and moon from the observer.

The difficulty lay in the observation of the angle at O. A very small error in this determination makes a very great



difference in the result. Aristarchus determined this angle to be 87 degrees when the reality is 89 degrees 52 minutes. In the resulting calculation, he estimated the Sun as 18 times more distant than the Moon, instead of over two hundred times more distant. (The angle at O is very near to a right angle, but in our figure, for the sake of clearness, we have represented it as much less than it actually is.)



#### TRIUMPH OF ASTRONOMICAL REASONING

This diagram illustrates the method (see text) by which Aristarchus of Samos calculated the relative sizes and distances of Sun and Moon. His reasoning was correct if his measurements were inaccurate; but the huge relative size of the Sun thus revealed probably led him to accept the heliocentric theory.

If we have the relative distances of Sun and Moon from the observer, the relative sizes of these bodies can be estimated, provided that we know the relative sizes of their disks, as they appear to an observer on the Earth. Aristarchus, therefore, also attempted to measure the relative sizes of the disks, and he calculated from his observation that the Sun was some seven thousand times larger than the Moon. Here further observational errors were introduced, and the ratio is ludicrously less than the truth. Nevertheless, Aristarchus correctly believed that while the Moon is smaller than the Earth, the Sun is enormously greater. This is a fundamental relationship which may well have affected his thought, for it must have seemed inherently improbable to him that an enormously large body, such as the Sun, would revolve round a relatively minute one, such as the Earth.

Contemporaries with Aristarchus at Alexandria were the astronomers Aris-

tyllus and Timocharis. These men were the first to record the positions of stars by means of numerical measurements of their distances from fixed positions in the sky. Thus they fixed the position of the more important stars in the signs of the zodiac near to which all the planets in their orbits pass. Thereby they facilitated the accurate observation and record of the movements of the planets. Their observations were used by later astronomers such as Hipparchus and Ptolemy.

It was at Alexandria that anatomy and physiology became recognized disciplines. The earliest important biological teacher of the school of Alexandria was Herophilus of Chalcedon, who flourished about 300 B.C. Herophilus was the first to dissect the human body publicly. In describing the anatomy of man he compared it to that of animals. He recognized the brain as the centre of the nervous system, and he regarded it as the seat of the intelligence. There are several parts of the brain which still bear the

names which Herophilus gave them. One such structure, which he called the 'wine-press' ('torcular'), is spoken of by anatomists to this day as the 'torcular of Herophilus.' It is the meeting-place of four great veins at the back of the head, which gave rise, it was thought, to a circular or whirling movement of the blood.

Another achievement of Herophilus was the first clear distinction between arteries and veins. He observed that arteries **Anatomical work of Herophilus** pulsate, in which respect, among others, they differ from the veins. Herophilus did not, however, ascribe this movement of the arteries to the action of the heart, but wrongly considered that it was a natural movement of the vessels themselves.

Almost contemporary with the anatomist Herophilus was the physiologist Erasistratus of Chios (c. 280 B.C.), who also taught at Alexandria. The physiology of Erasistratus was based on the idea that

every organ was a complex made up of a three-fold system of vessels—veins, arteries and nerves, extending by branching beyond the reach of vision. In those days, and for long afterwards, the nerves were wrongly regarded as hollow. It was thought that their cavities conveyed something material, the hypothetical 'nervous fluid,' in much the same way as the arteries and veins conveyed blood.

Erasistratus, like Herophilus, paid particular attention to the brain. He distinguished between the main brain, or cerebrum, and the lesser brain, or cerebellum. He observed the convolutions in the brain of both man and animals, and associated their greater complexity in man with his higher intelligence. He made a number of experiments on animals, and these experiments led him to distinguish between the anterior nerve-roots of the spinal cord, which convey the impulse to motion to the muscles, and the posterior roots, which convey the impressions, some of which are felt as sensations, from the surface of the body. This discovery of Erasistratus was forgotten or neglected till the time of Sir Charles Bell (1774-1842) in the nineteenth century.

Erasistratus also observed the lacteals. These lymphatic vessels convey the white, milk-like nourishing fluid, the so-called 'chyle' derived from the food in the intestines, to the liver.

The lacteals were seldom referred to again until Gasparo Aselli (1581-1626) recorded them. They play a very important part in the animal economy.

A word must be said as to the views of Erasistratus on the general working of the animal body. He supposed that air is taken in by the lungs and passes to the heart. Here, as he held, it enters the blood and is changed into a peculiar kind of 'pneuma' or spirit—the vital spirit—which is sent to the various parts of the body by the arteries. It is carried to the brain, among other parts, and there it is further altered into a second kind of pneuma, the animal spirit. This animal spirit passes to different parts of the body by the nerves, which are hollow. The physiological system of Erasistratus was further developed by Galen, who, however,

advanced great objections to the views of his forerunner (see page 2078).

After the first generation anatomical enthusiasm at Alexandria waned. There are three special points concerning it to which we may refer.

First, the names of Herophilus and Erasistratus are linked with the terrible charge of having dissected living men. There has been much discussion, but historians who have investigated the charge are satisfied that it is false.

Secondly, it may be noted that Erasistratus considered the 'pneuma' that circulates in the body of man to be ultimately drawn from the air, or pneuma of the great

**Physiology influences the Philosophers**

world. This view gave a physiological basis to the philosophical conception of the spirit of man as part of the 'world spirit.' Such a conception is frequently encountered in later writings, as, for example, in those of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. It is interesting to see physiology thus reacting on philosophy.

Thirdly, during the third century B.C. Alexandria became an important Jewish centre. Parts of the Old Testament were rendered into Greek about 250 B.C. The contact between Greek and Hebrew culture exercised an important influence upon the Jewish view of nature, going far towards rationalising it. Thus, while earlier Biblical literature contains many references to Divine intervention in the course of nature, the later so-called 'Wisdom Literature' practically ignores the supernatural in physical matters and, moreover, exhibits many other traces of Greek science. The influence of Greek science can similarly be traced into the domain of Hebrew physiological conceptions.

Thus, for instance, the seat of the understanding in the 'Wisdom Literature' is usually placed in the heart. This is a Greek view; but follows the conservative Aristotelian tradition, and is contrary to the more modern views of Herophilus and Erasistratus, who placed the seat of intelligence in the brain, as well as to the older Hebrew view, as in the seventh verse of the sixteenth Psalm, which placed it in the liver. In several places the 'Wisdom Literature' sets forth

the doctrine of the four elements (see page 1474): in the Wisdom of Solomon, for example. There are many other points of contact of Alexandrian thought with that of the later Old Testament or Apocryphal writings, as well as the New Testament.

Archimedes (287-212 B.C.) of Syracuse was the greatest mathematician of antiquity, and one of the greatest of all time.



#### DEATH OF A SUPREME MATHEMATICIAN

The only known representation of Archimedes is a mosaic believed to have come originally from Herculaneum; it was once the property of Jerome Bonaparte. We see the scientist sitting before an abacus on a table, just before his death at the hands of a Roman soldier in the sack of Syracuse (212 B.C.).

*Photo, Berlin State Museum*

Born in 287 B.C., himself the son of an astronomer, he was on intimate terms with King Hiero of Syracuse and his son Gelo. He visited Egypt, where he studied with the successors of Euclid. The life of Archimedes was entirely devoted to scientific pursuits.

The whole of Archimedes' work is instinct with a human element that is all too rare with mathematicians. Moreover, despite his absorption in science, he was not above applying his knowledge to practical matters, and his name is remembered in connexion with the Archimedean screw. He also contrived war engines for the defence of his native city against the Romans. Accounts of these and of other mechanical inventions are extant, but he himself wrote no works on them. On this point Plutarch (A.D. 46-120), remarks that:

Archimedes possessed so lofty a spirit that, though these devices had won him renown, yet he would leave behind him no writings on such subjects. He held mechanical work and all practical arts as ignoble and sordid. Therefore he placed his whole ambition with those pursuits in the beauty and subtlety of which is no taint of the common needs of life.

The story of how he died, absorbed in mathematics, is well known. At the siege of Syracuse in 212 B.C., the Romans had carried the city. Plutarch tells us that at this time

Archimedes was intent on working out some problem with a diagram. His mind and his eyes being alike fixed on the investigation, he ignored the capture of the city. A soldier came to him, and bade him follow him to the general. Archimedes refused to do so until he had worked out his problem, whereat the soldier, enraged, drew his sword and slew him.

A fine ancient mosaic illustrating the event, which is said to have come from Herculaneum, has been published and is here reproduced. It is said that Archimedes requested his friends to place upon his tomb a figure of a cylinder circumscribing a sphere. The

inscription was to give the ratio (3:2) which such a cylinder bears to the circumscribed sphere.

The works of Archimedes show a generous appreciation of the mathematical achievements of others, and he had very friendly personal relationships with his younger contemporaries, notably Eratosthenes. His character, as well as his lofty intellect, his compelling lucidity and his terseness of exposition, made a great impression on his fellow mathematicians. His fame extended beyond the Greek world, and Cicero, when quaestor of Sicily, was at pains to restore his tomb. From Cicero we hear also of the Planetarium of Archimedes, a sphere of the heavens, with models of the Sun, Moon, Earth and planets, whose movements were displayed

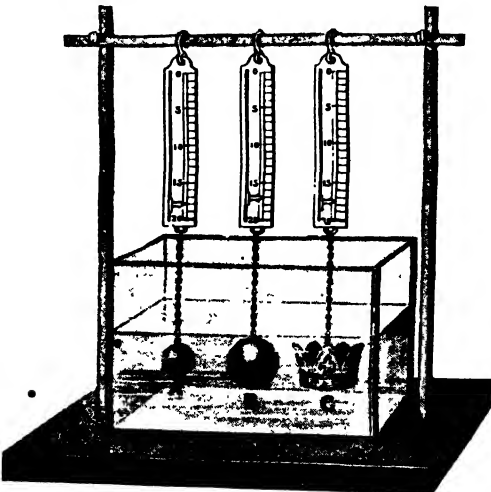
**Archimedes and his fellows**

with an elaboration of detail that even showed eclipses.

The most famous instance of the application of the knowledge of Archimedes to practical affairs is preserved for us by Vitruvius, a Roman writer on architecture. The story is best told in a translation of the actual words :

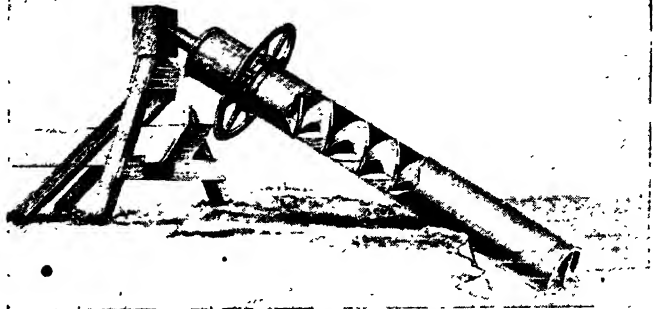
Archimedes made many wonderful discoveries, but one especially exhibits vast ingenuity. Hiero, on gaining royal power in Syracuse, vowed to devote a golden crown to the immortal gods. He contracted a fixed price for making it and weighed out a precise amount of gold for the purpose. The contractor duly delivered an exquisitely finished piece of handiwork, corresponding exactly in weight to the gold supplied.

Afterwards, however, a charge was made that gold had been abstracted and an equivalent weight of silver added during the manufacture. Hiero, not knowing how to detect the theft, requested Archimedes to consider it. While the matter was on his mind, Archimedes happened to go to the bath. On getting into it, he observed that, as the more of his body was immersed, so the more water ran out over the top. This suggested the solution. Transported with joy he leapt from the bath and rushed home



#### PRACTICAL GENIUS OF ARCHIMEDES

The words of Vitruvius quoted above are made clear by this diagram. A and B are the gold and silver equivalents respectively of the crown when weighed in air; C is the crown. Archimedes measured the water displaced; this method weighs it, which comes to the same thing.



#### HOW THE SCREW OF ARCHIMEDES WORKS

A helical flange, if revolved inside a sloping cylinder whose end dips below the water, will clearly propel water upwards just as a wood drill ejects the sawdust that it produces. This is the method, in use to-day in Egypt, that Archimedes evolved.

*After Hart, 'Makers of Science'*

naked, crying as he went, 'Eureka! eureka!' ('I have found it, I have found it!').

He then made two masses of the same weight as the crown, one of gold, the other silver. Next he filled a vessel with water to the brim and dropped the mass of silver into it. As much water ran out as was equal in bulk to the silver. This overflow when measured gave the quantity of water corresponding to the mass of silver. He did likewise with the gold, and found that a smaller quantity of water corresponded to it, as much less, in fact, as the mass of gold was less in bulk than the silver. Finally, filling the vessel again, and dropping the crown itself therein, he found that more water ran over than for the mass of gold of like weight. Reasoning from this, he detected the mixing of silver with the gold, and this made the theft of the contractor perfectly clear.

A well known appliance also involving a problem in hydrostatics is associated with the name of Archimedes to this day, as mentioned above. It is the Screw of Archimedes, a device for raising water. It is said that Archimedes discovered it during a visit to Egypt, and the device is still in wide use in that country.

To Archimedes the ancient world owed an exposition of the doctrine of levers (see diagram in following page). Very important is his statement of the possibility of moving a weight, however large, by a force, however small—an extremely valuable theoretical application of levers. It is related that the philosopher exclaimed, addressing Hiero: 'Give me but a place to stand, and I can move the world.' He proceeded to demonstrate this by holding the end of a compound



#### FOOT-WORK ON THE SCREW

One method of working the Screw of Archimedes, as we learn from a late Ptolemaic figurine, was for a slave to stand on it and revolve it with his feet after the fashion of a treadmill

*British Museum*

lever by which, with only the slightest effort, he was able to move a heavily laden ship.

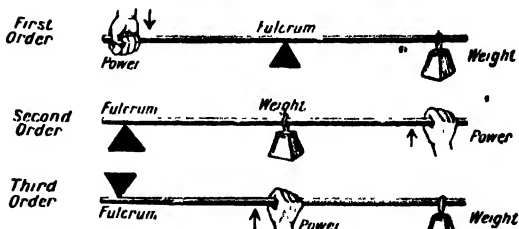
Perhaps the earliest work of Archimedes that we have is the first book *On Plane Equilibriums*, in which the fundamental principles of mechanics are demonstrated by rigorous geometric proofs. The second book of this work shows the method of finding the centres of gravity of a parabolic segment, and of a portion of it cut off by a parallel to the base.

Among the mathematical achievements of Archimedes a very high place must be given to his methods of measuring the areas of curved surfaces in general and of conic sections in particular. In a work entitled *The Quadrature of the Parabola*, Archimedes relates how he had been led by the study of mechanics to

the solution of the problem of finding the area of a segment of a parabola cut off by a chord, and that he had then obtained proof of the correctness of his solution by rigorous geometric demonstration. Moreover, in the same work, we find in use the method known as 'integration.' This method was initiated by Archimedes, and has since led to the elaboration of that most potent instrument of mathematical thought, the 'calculus of the infinite,' to the further developments of which no boundary can be set.

The method of integration, as well as the method of using mechanics for the solution of problems afterwards demonstrated by geometry, leads us to the consideration of a very interesting treatise by Archimedes, the nature of which is suggested by the title *On Method*. This treatise is of great importance and of romantic interest. It was lost for many centuries. In a library at Constantinople there was a manuscript prayer book of the twelfth century written on parchment which had previously been used. The original text had been erased; it was thus what is known as a 'palimpsest.' A scholar who carefully examined this palimpsest in 1906 found that the underlying writing could be read. When deciphered it turned out to be the long-lost *On Method of Archimedes*. Apart from its intrinsic interest, it is of special value as giving us a glimpse of Archimedes at work. It shows us the great mathematician applying both integration and the experimental use of mechanics as a preliminary to mathematical demonstration.

For the most part, Archimedes, like other Greek men of science, gives us only his final results. He gives us his proofs,



#### ARCHIMEDES' THREE ORDERS OF LEVER

Archimedes first expounded the three systems of levers: in the first there is a gain or loss of power according to the position of the fulcrum, in the second a gain, and in the third a loss.

but does not tell us how he reached them. By means of this new document, however, we now have some knowledge of his actual manner of investigation. The Method of Archimedes is dedicated to Eratosthenes. After recalling the mathematical discoveries which he had sent him on a former occasion, Archimedes proceeds to inform him that he is now sending a description of the way in which he elicited them.

In essence the 'Method' consists in the application of two principles, which may be less distinctly observed in other works of Archimedes. The first principle is that a plane figure may be regarded as an aggregate of an infinite number of parallel lines with certain common properties. The second principle is the consideration of the respective weights of the two plane figures whose area has to be composed.

This method is similarly applied to demonstrate relationship between the areas of solid figures considered as aggregates of an infinite number of parallel planes; it amounts to a practical solution of problems of the relation between areas or volumes of two figures by analysis, mechanical or other, after which the philosopher returns to a synthetical mathematical process. The point is that he gains an insight into the solution of his problem before he seeks its mathematical demonstration.

In his treatise On Floating Bodies, Archimedes set forth some of the fundamental principles of hydrostatics, and includes the law of specific gravity, which he applied to the determination of the constituents of Hiero's crown. This treatise was for long known only in a Latin translation made in the Middle Ages. The Greek text was discovered in 1906 in the same Codex that contains the palimpsest of the Method.

In a fragment that has survived of The Measurement of a Circle Archimedes finds an approximate value for the very important ratio between the circumference and the diameter of a circle, the element known to modern mathematicians as  $\pi$ . This he gives as between  $3\frac{1}{8}$  and  $3\frac{1}{4}$ . He later arrived at an even more accurate estimate of the value of  $\pi$ .

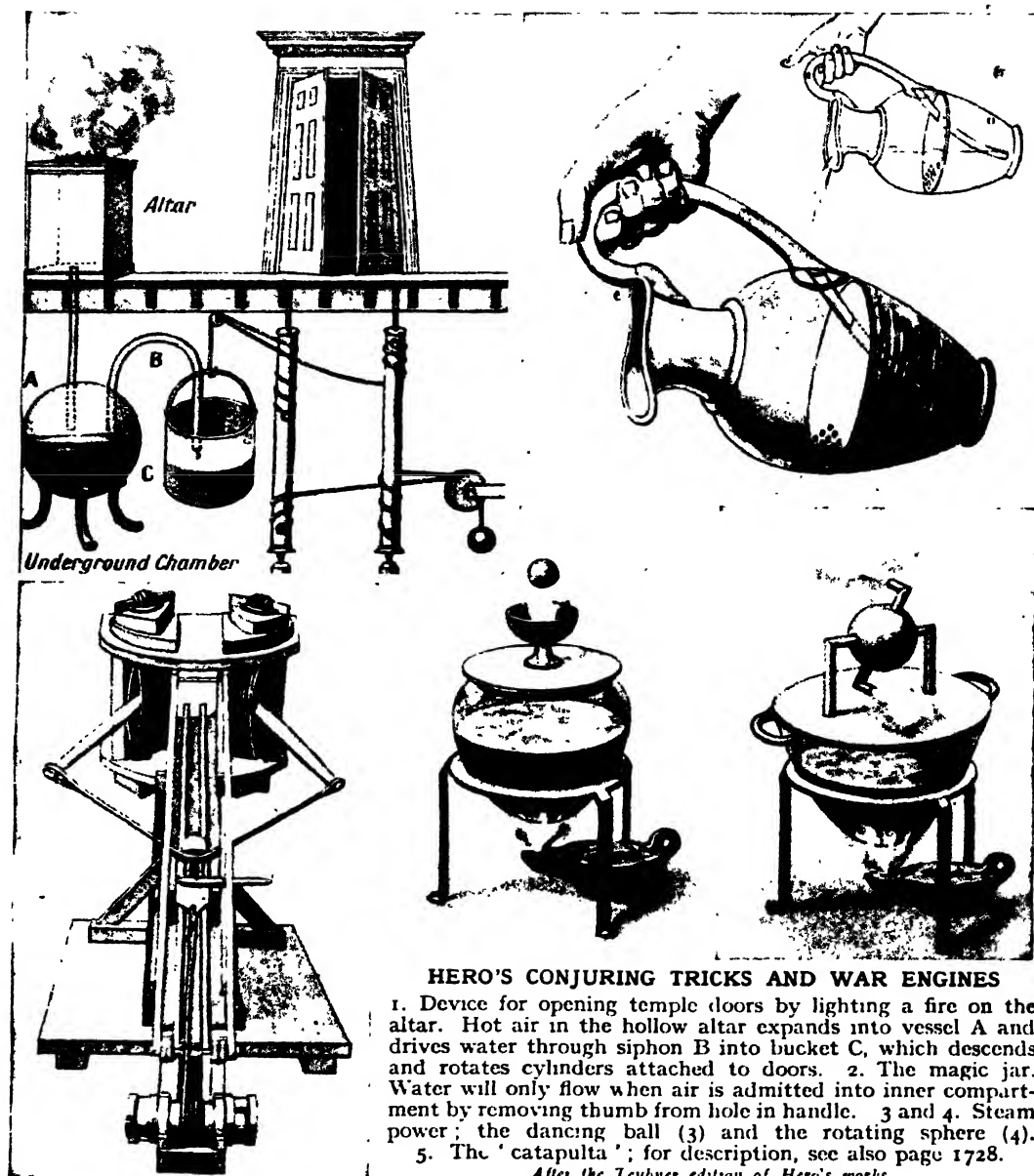
Finally, we may mention the remarkable system used by Archimedes for expressing very large numbers. So efficient is this system that it enables any number to be expressed, up to that which, in our notation, would require eighty thousand million million ciphers. Archimedes expresses the opinion that his system was adequate to express the number of grains of sand that it would take to fill the universe! He therefore

calls his work The Sand Reckoner. From his calculation of the size of the universe, we get our idea of his cosmic conceptions. We learn that he derived from Aristarchus a belief in a heliocentric universe, with the Earth revolving in a comparatively unimportant orbit. Nevertheless, the cosmic calculations of Archimedes lack the rigid argument of his mathematical and mechanical works.

In the departments that we have discussed the sum of these contributions to human knowledge by Archimedes is indeed stupendous, and there were moreover a number of other works by him now known only by tradition or by citations in Greek and Arabic writings.

Archimedes was the effective founder of scientific mechanics. There were others who followed in his footsteps, and of those we may take as typical the ingenious and voluminous writer, Hero of Alexandria, whose date is disputed, but who probably flourished about 100 B.C. Hero applied himself to practical matters, and to the entertainment of his readers, by the invention of ingenious toys, rather than to the high themes of philosophical mathematics and astronomy as did Archimedes.

Among the more entertaining treatises of Hero is the Pneumatica, which contains accounts of many conjuring tricks. Thus the principle of the siphon is applied to a jug from which water will pour or not at will. He also describes the application of the principle of the expansion of air by heat to the automatic opening of temple doors when a fire is lit on an altar without; a water organ of complicated structure; a ball that leaps and a sphere that spins by the force of steam, and a number of other ingenious devices. Many of these



#### HERO'S CONJURING TRICKS AND WAR ENGINES

1. Device for opening temple doors by lighting a fire on the altar. Hot air in the hollow altar expands into vessel A and drives water through siphon B into bucket C, which descends and rotates cylinders attached to doors.
2. The magic jar. Water will only flow when air is admitted into inner compartment by removing thumb from hole in handle.
- 3 and 4. Steam power; the dancing ball (3) and the rotating sphere (4).
5. The 'catapulta'; for description, see also page 1728.

*After the Teubner edition of Hero's works*

devices, as well as elaborate constructions with pulleys, springs and levers, are invoked for Hero's 'automatic theatre.'

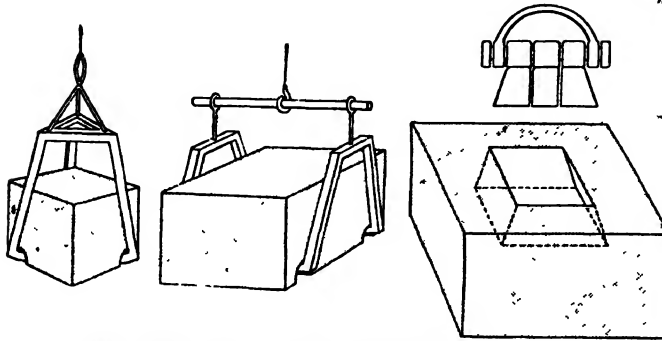
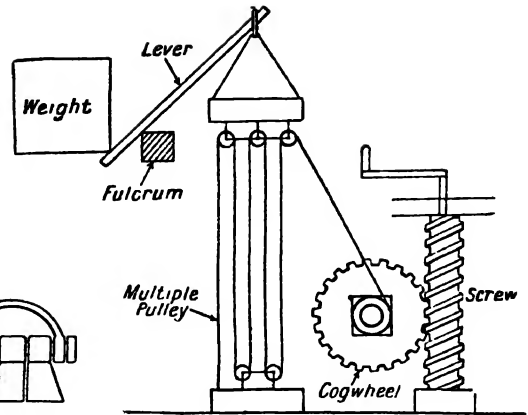
In antiquity as in modern times a large part of the ingenuity of scientists was devoted to the science of war. Hero was the author of a work on war engines in which he describes the 'catapulta' or 'palintonon' (literally, 'back-stretched'), a weapon capable of hurling huge stones or balls, and suitable for siege purposes.

Hero also devoted much attention to surveying; and in one of his books he

describes the forms of instruments in use for the purpose. One of these was the 'dioptra,' which was most elaborately constructed and served many of the purposes for which surveyors now use the theodolite. He was particularly ingenious in his use of water levels. In his work On Mechanics, which is lost in Greek but has luckily come down to us in a translation from the Arabic, he shows full apprehension of the uses of cogwheels; of the rack and pinion; of the use of multiple pulleys; of the transmission of force from a rotating

screw to an axis at right angles to it; and of the combination of all these devices with levers. Moreover, he sets forth many of the devices nowadays familiar to architects, builders and masons.

We may now turn to the department of optics, in which the ancients took a special interest. The oldest treatise on the mathematical aspect of the subject that has



#### MECHANICAL DEVICES KNOWN TO HERO

Top right: To demonstrate that he understood all three devices, Hero in his *Mechanics*, which we possess in an Arabic translation, described this hypothetical combination of screw-and-cogwheel, multiple pulley and lever. Bottom left: Methods of raising heavy blocks, still in use by masons.

one medium into another of differing density, as for example from air into glass or water. Cleomedes, who lived in the first century A.D., referred to the bent appearance of rods, or other objects such as oars, when immersed in water, and he knew that an object, lying in an opaque basin and just obscured by the brim, could

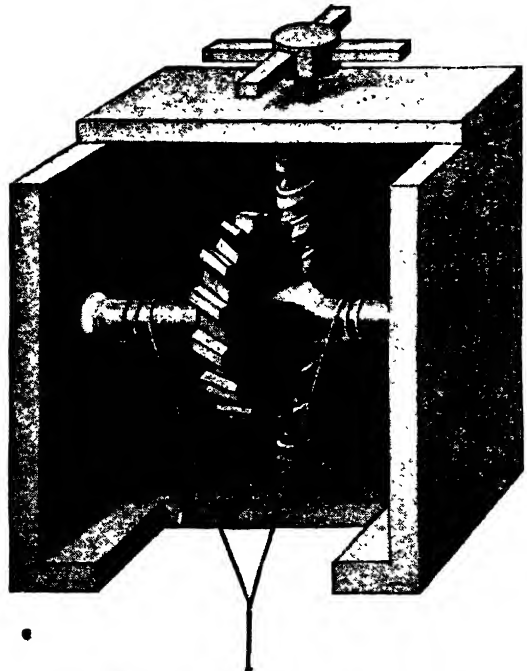
come down to us is by Euclid. He considered that light moves in straight lines. Like nearly all the ancients, and following Plato, he holds that an essential factor in vision was something that proceeds from the eye. Thus in opening his work he tells us that

we assume that the visual rays proceed in straight lines, leaving a certain space between them. The figure formed by the visual rays is a cone having its apex at the eye, and its base at the object seen. Only those things are seen on which the visual rays impinge.

This view is quite different from the modern conception, that objects are seen only as the result of light waves from the object which impinge on our eyes.

Hero of Alexandria advanced the knowledge of optics from the experimental side. He showed that light is reflected from a surface at an angle equal to the angle of incidence. His dioptra, to which we have already referred, depended for its working on the equality of these angles.

A beginning was made by the Greeks of the scientific study of refraction, that is, of the behaviour of light in passing from



#### WORM DRIVE IN ANCIENT GREECE

What is known to-day as a worm drive, that is, the transmission of force from a rotating screw to a cogwheel, involving tremendous gearing-down, was well known to Hero of Alexandria.



be rendered visible by pouring in water. He applied this principle to the atmosphere and suggested that the Sun, even when below the horizon, might be visible under certain circumstances. It is remarkable that he failed to give a practical application to this view of atmospheric refraction, for he disbelieves statements of his predecessors that in certain lunar eclipses the Sun seems to be still above the horizon while the eclipsed Moon rises in the east.

A beginning of what may be regarded as 'physiological optics'—that is, the science which deals with the eye as an optical instrument—was made by a medical writer, one Rufus of Ephesus, who flourished about A.D. 100. This Rufus had a fairly accurate conception of the structure of the eye. Some of the names which he gave to parts of this organ have survived, either in their original form or in Latin translation, in modern scientific nomenclature. Rufus was the first writer who correctly described the lens of the eye; he speaks of it as 'lentic-like.'

The best known of the early writers on optics was Ptolemy, of whose scientific achievements we shall have more to say presently. He not only knew that lumin-

ous rays in passing from one medium to another are deflected, but he also attempted, with some degree of success, to measure the angle of deflection.

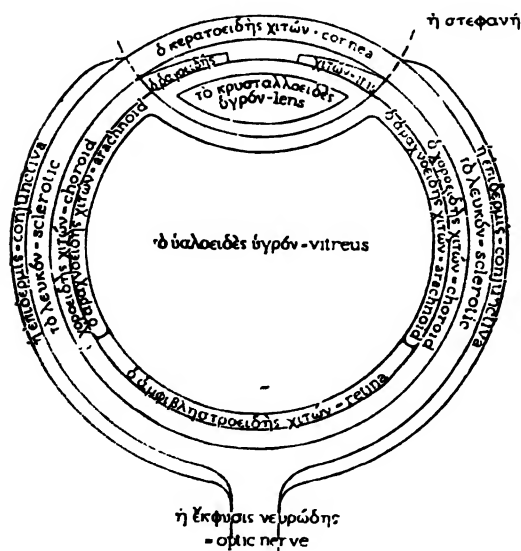
Before leaving the subject of optics it will be well to remove a common misunderstanding. It is often wrongly stated that the ancients knew of the properties of lenses, **Greek ignorance of lenses** and that they used magnifying glasses for cutting seals. For this there is no evidence. It is true that the ancients had some knowledge of burning glasses, and one or two writers speak of their magnifying powers, though we do not hear that these ever received any application. Apart from the lens of the eye, however, they were ignorant of lenses. Moreover, even had they known of them, their properties could not have been clearly described, since the view that regarded vision as resulting from something that emanated from the eye would have stood in the way.

The Ptolemies, in their zeal for learning, did not forget geography. Ptolemy III Euergetes (247-222 B.C.) rendered the greatest service to geography by his encouragement of Eratosthenes of Cyrene (c. 276 to c. 194 B.C.), who was the first student to devote himself to the mathematical aspects of the subject. Eratosthenes became chief librarian at Alexandria, and was perhaps the most learned man of antiquity. He laid the foundation of mathematical geography in an important work of which substantial fragments have survived.

The most important investigation of Eratosthenes is his measurement of the globe of the Earth. This was performed by an operation of beautiful simplicity. He started from the knowledge that at Syene (the modern Aswan) at noon on mid-summer day an upright rod casts no shadow and a deep well is illumined to the bottom by the Sun; that Syene was 5,000 stadia from Alexandria; and that Syene was directly south of Alexandria.

Now, with this knowledge, it is clear that the ratio

$$\frac{\text{angle at centre of Earth subtended by 5000 stadia}}{\text{four right-angles}} = \frac{5000 \text{ stadia}}{\text{circumference of Earth.}}$$



THE EYE ACCORDING TO RUFUS

This diagram of the structure of the eye has been prepared according to the description of Rufus of Ephesus, c. A.D. 100. The modern scientific names of the parts are accompanied by those of Rufus; in many instances they correspond.

From Sanger, 'Evolution of Anatomy'

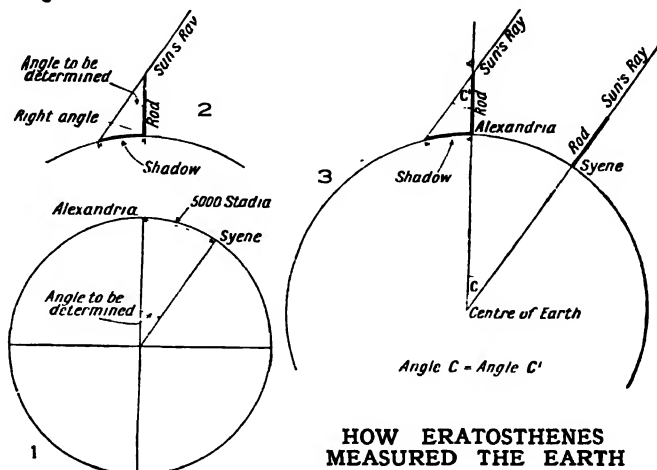
This is made clear by the accompanying diagrams (Diagram 1).

The problem is, therefore, to determine the angle at the centre subtended by 5,000 stadia. But if on midsummer day the length of the shadow cast by an upright rod at Alexandria is measured, then we shall be able to determine the angle which the Sun's ray makes with the rod (Diagram 2). Since, however, the Sun is so vastly distant from the Earth, the Sun's ray at Alexandria is in effect parallel to the Sun's ray at Syene, so that angle  $C^1 = \text{angle } C$  (Diagram 3), and by obtaining  $C^1$  we obtain  $C$ . Eratosthenes determined the angle which the Sun's ray makes with the rod by a special appliance. The apparatus is, however, not essential and is therefore omitted from the description.

Having determined the dimensions of the Earth, Eratosthenes proceeded to consider the portion of it that was geographically known. Here, in common with all ancient geographers, he fell into a curious error, or rather self-imposed limitation. Eratosthenes regarded the habitable world as a definite portion of the Earth's surface, placed wholly within the northern hemisphere and forming only about a third of that. This habitable world, again following his predecessors, Eratosthenes regarded as longer than broad. He estimated that the distance from the Atlantic to the Eastern Ocean was 78,000 stadia (that is, about 7,800 geographical miles), and from the parallel of the Cinnamon Land to the parallel of Thule was 38,000 stadia. As Eratosthenes estimated the circumference or equator of the Earth at 250,000 stadia, he was able to estimate the circumference at the parallel of the Strait of the Pillars of Hercules (the Strait of Gibraltar), which he knew was also that of Rhodes (latitude 36).

This fundamental parallel passed, as he erroneously thought, through other important points—the westernmost point of Spain, for example, and the southern

points of Italy and Greece and the foot of the Taurus mountains. At this parallel the total circumference of the world he estimated at 200,000 stadia. The rest was sea, so that, as he observed, 'if it were not for the vast extent of the Atlantic sea one might sail from Spain to India along the same parallel.' This is the first suggestion for the circumnavigation of the globe.



By measuring the angle of incidence of the Sun's rays at noon on midsummer's day at Alexandria, and knowing the distance therefrom of Syene where they were directly overhead at the same time (as shown at both places by the shadow of an upright rod), Eratosthenes calculated the circumference of the Earth.

At right angles to the important parallel of Rhodes, Eratosthenes determined, as we have already seen, a north-south line between Alexandria and Syene. This line produced northward he regarded as passing through Byzantium and beyond to the mouth of the river Borysthenes, now called the Dnieper. Southward, he considered that it passed to Meroë, and then along the Nile to the Sembritaë.

In both these fundamental lines there are several errors of allocation. These determinations, together with those on other parallels and lines of longitude, are, however, sufficiently accurate for a recognizable map to be constructed for the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean.

Such a map was not, however, constructed by Eratosthenes himself. Hipparchus the astronomer (c. 150 B.C.) was the first clearly to form the conception of a map of the Earth's surface. This idea was afterwards put into practice by Strabo and by Ptolemy. The determinations of

latitude and longitude made by Hipparchus helped to make this possible.

Between Eratosthenes and Strabo there was a number of explorers, merchants, military officers and geographical writers who made the work of Ptolemy possible. We can but glance at one or two of them.

Just as the conquests of Alexander had opened up the East to science, so did the advance of the Roman Empire open up the West. The first writer to avail himself of this new knowledge was the historian Polybius (204-122 B.C.). Polybius was present at the destruction of Carthage in

the Red Sea, made at least two voyages southward along the African coast.

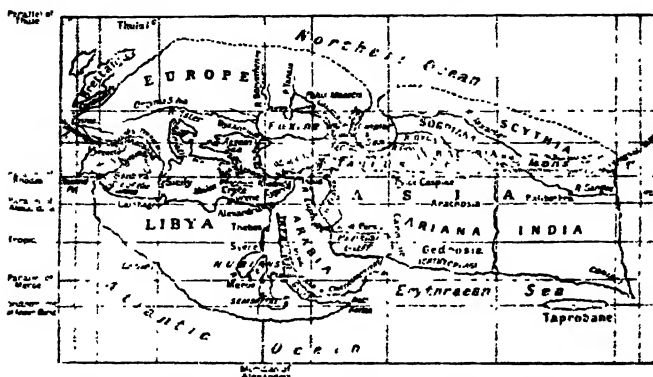
The wars and military expeditions of the Romans, both in the East and in the West, opened up the world still more. Thus Strabo of Amasia in Pontus (born c. 63 B.C.) had plenty of material to work upon when he began his general survey of the world. The Geography of Strabo is the most important work of the kind that has come down to us from antiquity. It is the first attempt to compose what we should nowadays call a 'general geography.'

Strabo was a considerable traveller, and tells us that he had 'journeyed westward to the part of Etruria opposite Sardinia and southward from the Euxine (i.e. the Black Sea) to the borders of Ethiopia. Perhaps not one of those who have written geographies has visited more places than I have within these limits.' It is, however, mainly as a systematic compiler of the knowledge of the world available in his time that he is important.

Working largely at the metropolis of Rome, Strabo was in a good position to receive authentic information.

Nevertheless, he bases himself mainly on the Greek authorities such as Polybius, rather than on Latin sources. He stayed long at Alexandria where he was able to absorb the best Greek geographical tradition as established by Eratosthenes. Nevertheless, he often accepts blindly the fables of Homer, treating with undeserved contempt the records of Herodotus. As regards the mathematical portion of his task, the qualifications of Strabo were inadequate, and far inferior to those of his predecessor, Eratosthenes, and of Ptolemy, his successor.

Strabo opens by indicating the vast extension of knowledge that had taken place in his day, especially as a result of the expansion of the Roman and Parthian Empires. Despite this extension, he is struck by the comparative smallness of the inhabited world. He throws out the



MAP CONSTRUCTED AFTER ERATOSTHENES

The determination of parallels and longitudes undertaken by Eratosthenes is never incorporated in a map; but by following his figures a recognizable map of the Eastern Hemisphere can be made. His fundamental parallel passes through Gibraltar and Rhodus, and longitude through Alexandria and Syene.

146 B.C., and was employed by Scipio to explore the coasts of Africa. He also visited Gaul and Spain. His descriptions, particularly of Spain, are very accurate, and he even attempts an estimation of the length of the Tagus. He has much valuable information about the Alps, and his knowledge of the geography of Italy was superior to that of any of his predecessors. Although an historian rather than a geographer, Polybius understood the necessity of constructing a correct map, and therefore gives much attention to the determination of distances and positions.

During the second and first century B.C., improved accounts of the Red, Black and Mediterranean Seas, and the countries bounding them, began to be available for students. Determinations, even of points in India, were attempted. Mention should be made of the navigator Eudoxus of Cyzicus, who, after exploring

interesting suggestion that there might be other continents still unknown. The length of the inhabited world from the Islands of the Blessed (that is the Canaries) to the Silk Land (that is China) was not more than about a third of the total circumference of the globe in the temperate zone. It was, therefore, possible that within the vacant space might be other worlds inhabited by different races of men. •

Despite these interesting speculations, Strabo makes no great advance on Eratosthenes in his knowledge of the world as a whole. It was principally by his detailed knowledge of Europe and especially of the northern and western parts of that continent that Strabo improved on his Alexandrian predecessor.

In describing the world as a whole Strabo reduces its width to 30,000 stadia, an estimate below the 38,000 of Eratosthenes. The abbreviation is due to Strabo's scepticism as regards the northern regions. He rejects Thule, and he disbelieves in any habitable land as far north as the Arctic Circle. Ierne (Ireland) is for him the most northerly of known territories, and he tells us that it is 'barely habitable on account of the cold.' He considers the habitable world to extend south about 3,000 stadia beyond Meroë.

An interesting feature of Strabo's work is his account of how a map of the habitable world should be made. This, he points out, is not difficult

**How Strabo made his maps** upon an actual globe, but such a globe needs to be very large to enable details to be inserted. We must, therefore, reduce such a map to a plane surface; in other words we must adopt some system of what we now call 'projection.' He therefore proceeds to consider the countries which he describes as though represented on a flat surface.

Many of the distortions in Strabo's account of the world are due to erroneous projection. His best accounts are those of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, where his method of projection distorts the least. As he gets farther from the Mediterranean, his errors become greater. There are errors in Strabo, however, which we should not have expected. We may note that the Pyrenees are

represented by him as running from north to south, when in fact they extend from east to west, and the southern coast of France is brought south of Byzantium and the Aegean, when in fact it is considerably north of them. With regard to the Caspian, Strabo shared the opinion of Eratosthenes and the earlier geographers since Herodotus that it was an inlet of the Northern Ocean. The north of Asia and the region east of Sogdiana was, he tells us, a mere blank to him. A vast chain of mountains extended, he thought, from east to west across Asia, bounding India on the north. From this range the Tigris and Euphrates took their rise in the west, the Indus and Ganges in the east.

The final geographical synthesis of antiquity was the work of Claudius Ptolemaeus, usually spoken of as Ptolemy, who died about A.D. 180. He must not be confused with the

**Ptolemy the great Geographer**

kings of the same name. Ptolemy worked at Alexandria, and was no less important as a geographer than as an astronomer. Though he wrote in Greek, he worked on itineraries of Roman officials and merchants.

Ptolemy developed his own manner of representing the curved surface of the Earth on a plane surface. In his scheme of projection the parallels of latitude are arcs of concentric circles, the centres of which are at the North Pole. Chief among the parallels are the equator and circles passing respectively through Thule, through Rhodes and through Meroë. The meridians of longitude are represented by straight lines which converge to the Pole.

Ptolemy delineates in this manner the whole of the then known world and the limits that he sets give a clear idea of the range of geographical vision in Imperial Roman times. The boundaries of Ptolemy's world are: on the north, the Ocean which surrounds the British Isles, the northern parts of Europe, and the unknown land in the northern region of Asia; on the south, the unknown land which encloses the Indian Sea and the unknown land to the south of Libya and Aethiopia; on the east, the unknown land which adjoins the eastern nations of Asia, the Sinae (Chinese) and the people of

Serica, the silk-producing land; on the west, the great Western Ocean and unknown parts of Libya. The area thus surveyed covers in length a hemisphere and in breadth between  $63^{\circ}$  north latitude and  $16\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  south latitude.

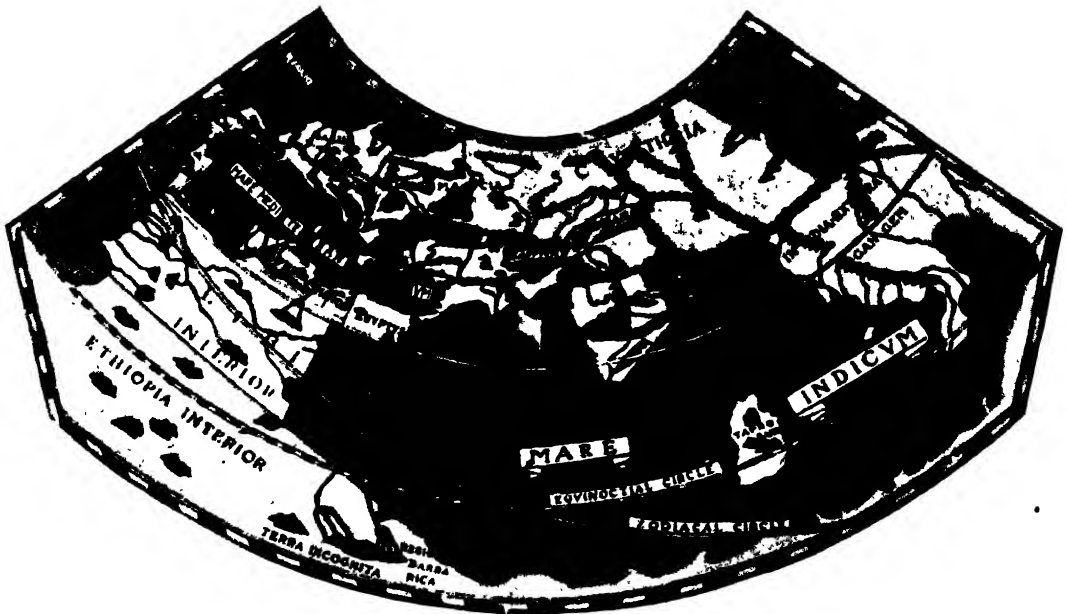
The Geographical Outline of Ptolemy is the only complete scientific ancient geography that we have. As originally written it was furnished with maps. These have long since disappeared, but as Ptolemy gives the latitude and longitude of the places that he mentions, his charts can be reconstructed. A peculiar interest attaches to the map of Britain which can be thus put together. It would seem that Scotland was bent eastward with its axis at a right angle to that of England. This is an unusual degree of error for Ptolemy. It has therefore been suggested that he was here working not on records brought back by travellers, but on actual maps of the island, and that he made the mistake of fitting the map of Scotland on to that of England along the wrong side.

A link between the Athenian and Alexandrian schools was the long-lived

Theophrastus (372–287 B.C., see page 1486). He was himself on the one hand the pupil of Aristotle and on the other a contemporary of the first generation of Alexandrian biologists.

Ancient science suffered from lack of a scientific terminology. This defect was felt acutely by Theophrastus, and he attempted to remedy it in his own chosen department, that of botany. He did not rely, as we do, for his terminology on an ancient and classical language, but sought rather to give a special technical meaning to words in current use. Among such words are 'carpos,' fruit, and 'pericarpion,' seed vessel. It is from Theophrastus that the botanical definition of fruit and of pericarp has come down to us.

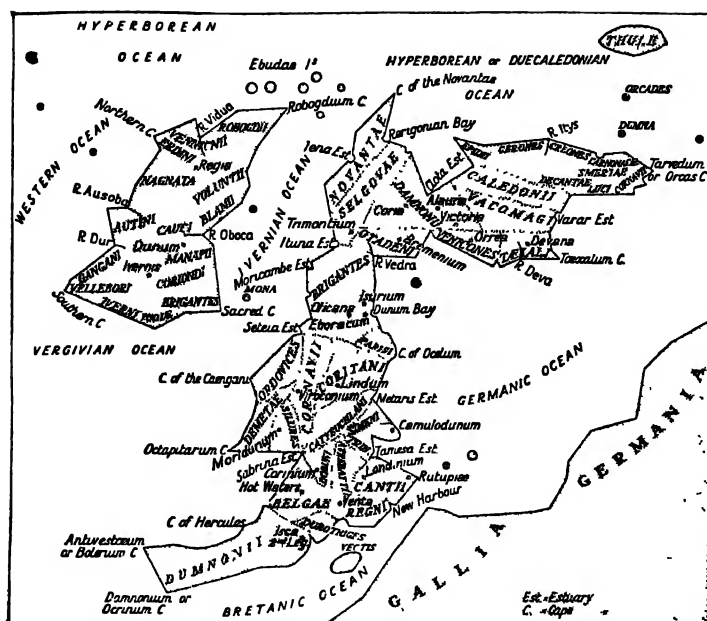
It is very interesting to observe that Theophrastus makes a clear and exact distinction between monocotyledons and dicotyledons. Interesting, too, is his attempted distinction of sex in plants, an attempt which is only successful in the case of the palms. In that group, as Herodotus tells us, the ancient Babylonians had the same idea.



#### HIGHEST LEVEL OF GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG THE ANCIENTS

Ptolemy the geographer, working nearly 400 years after Eratosthenes, from whom he is separated by the great names of Hipparchus and Strabo, actually furnished his geography with maps. These have perished, but they can be reconstructed from the latitudes and longitudes that he gives. The result, as seen above, is a great advance on Eratosthenes, owing probably to the data collected in the interval by Roman road makers, travellers and merchants.

*From the 1472 edition of Ptolemy's works*



#### PTOLEMY AT FAULT ON BRITAIN

The one curious feature of Ptolemy's map is the distortion in the shape of Britain. Scotland projects eastwards from the north of England in a way that suggests that Ptolemy may have had separate, pre-existing maps of these two regions from which to work, and joined them together incorrectly.

From *'The Legacy of Rome,'* Clarendon Press

It is unfortunate that the biological works of the Alexandrian school have almost entirely disappeared, save for the small fragments of the works of Herophilus and Erasistratus. In the last pre-Christian and the first two post-Christian centuries, however, there were several writers of biological importance whose works have survived. Foremost among these we should place Crateuas, who introduced the systematic representation of plants by figures rather than by description. This method, important still, was a most significant innovation at a time when there was no proper system of botanical nomenclature. Copies of figures by Crateuas have actually come down to us. They are of absorbing interest as the earliest specimens of scientific draftsmanship.

The first Christian century brings us a writer who, while scientifically inconsiderable, is important as the main carrier of such tradition of Greek biology as reached the Middle Ages—Dioscorides (lived c. A.D. 60). He was an army surgeon who served in Asia Minor, and wrote

a work on drugs which consists of short accounts of plants arranged almost without reference to the nature of the plants themselves. The descriptions given, however, are often terse and striking, and sometimes include a few words on the habits and habitats of plants. This elaborate pharmacopoeia was early illustrated in the style of Crateuas, and many fine copies of these figures have come down to us.

The history of the work of Dioscorides reveals it as one of the most influential botanical treatises ever penned, despite the absence from it of anything like general ideas. It provided most of the little botanical knowledge that reached the Middle Ages. It furnished the chief

stimulus to botanical research at the time of the Renaissance. It has decided the general form of every modern pharmacopoeia. It has determined a large part of modern plant nomenclature, both popular and scientific.

The greatest biological and medical synthesis of antiquity was made by Galen (A.D. 131–201). This remarkable man was born at Pergamum, which had once been the rival of Alexandria as a seat of learning. In Galen's time the dissection of the human body had fallen into desuetude, and anatomy had therefore declined. He made, however, accurate anatomical and physiological studies on a number of animals. Among these was the Barbary ape, the structure of which is not very far removed from that of man. After studying at various centres, Galen stayed for a time at Alexandria, where he had the opportunity of examining a human skeleton. Later he proceeded to Rome, where almost the whole of his active life was cast. He was immensely successful as a practitioner and was the personal attendant of three emperors.

Galen was perhaps the most voluminous writer of antiquity. Many of his works are lost, but those which survive occupy twenty-one closely printed, thick octavo volumes. It would, therefore, be impossible to consider all his medical views. We shall, however, consider his physiological system, because it became the accepted system of later antiquity.

The basic principle of life in the Galenic philosophy was a spirit, or 'pneuma,' drawn from the world-spirit in the act of breathing. It entered the body through the 'trachea arteria' (wind-pipe), and so passed to the lung and thence through the 'vein-like artery,' which we now call the pulmonary vein, to the left ventricle, where it encountered the blood. But what was the origin of the blood? To this question his answer was ingenious, but the errors that it involved remained till the time of Harvey. Galen believed that chyle, brought from the alimentary tract by the portal vessel, arrived at the liver. That organ, he considered, had the



#### CRATEUAS AND DIOSCORIDES

The Juliana Anicia manuscript contains a drawing of Crateuas executing one of his plates from nature. The plant, however, is a preposterous mandragora held by the nymph Epinoia (Intelligence); and Dioscorides (A.D. 60) is actually shown as his master.



#### GREEK BOTANICAL DRAWING

The coloured plates with which Crateuas (c. 150 B.C.) illustrated his botanical work are lost to us, but the manuscript of Dioscorides, made in A.D. 512 for Juliana Anicia, daughter of the Emperor Olybrius, contains what are almost certainly direct copies. Above, a plant of the peppermint class, beautifully executed

*Austrian National Library, Vienna*

power of elaborating the chyle into venous blood, and of imbuing it with a particular spirit, or pneuma, innate in all living substance so long as it remains alive. This pneuma was spoken of as the 'natural spirit.' Charged with natural spirit derived from the liver, and with nutritive material derived from the intestines, the blood, Galen believed, was distributed by the liver throughout the venous system which arises from it, ebbing and flowing in the veins. One great main branch of the venous system was the right side of the heart.

For the blood that entered this important branch, the right side of the heart, the Galenic scheme reserved two possible fates. The greater part remained awhile in the ventricle parting with its impurities, which were carried off by the 'artery-like vein'—now called the pulmonary artery—to the lung, and there exhaled. These impurities being discharged, the venous blood in the right ventricle ebbed back again into the general venous system. A small portion of it followed a different course. This small portion trickled through minute channels in the inter-ventricular septum and entered the left

ventricle drop by drop. There it encountered the pneuma brought thither from the outside world by the trachea and vein-like artery. These drops of blood in contact with the air in the left ventricle became elaborated into a higher type of pneuma, the vital spirit, which was distributed through the arteries with the arterial blood.

Among the arteries some went to the head, and thereby vital spirit was brought to the base of the brain. Here the blood was minutely divided by the channels of the 'rete mirabile.' In that mysterious organ the blood became charged with yet a third pneuma, the 'animal spirit'; this was distributed by the nerves, which were supposed to be hollow.

The whole knowledge possessed by the world in the department of physiology from the third to the seventeenth century, nearly all the biological conceptions till the thirteenth, and most of the anatomy and much of the botany until the sixteenth century, all the ideas of the physical structure of living things throughout the Middle Ages, were contained in a small number of these works of Galen. The biological works of Aristotle and Theophrastus lingered precariously in a few rare manuscripts in the monasteries of the East; the total output of hundreds of years of Alexandrian and Pergamene activities was utterly destroyed; the Ionian biological works, of which a sample has by a miracle survived, were forgotten; but these vast, windy, ill-arranged treatises of Galen lingered on. Translated into Latin, Syriac, Arabic and Hebrew, they saturated the intellectual world of the Middle Ages. Commented on by later Greek writers, who were in turn translated into the same list of languages, they were yet again served up under the names of other Greek writers.



DRAWING OF GALEN

No portrait of Galen remains except that in the Juhana Anicia manuscript (see opposite page)—it is badly perished, but capable of being restored, as above, under careful examination.

*Courtesy of Dr. Singer*

What is the secret of the vitality of these Galenic biological conceptions? The answer can be given in four words: Galen is a teleologist. He believes, that is, that everything is made by God to a particular and determinate end ('telos' means end, aim). Moreover, his teleology is of a kind which happened to fit in with the prevailing theological attitude of the Middle Ages, whether Christian, Mahomedan or Jewish. According to him, everything which exists and displays activity in the human body originates in and is formed by an Intelligent Being and on an intelligible plan, so that the organ in structure and function is the result of that plan. 'It was the Creator's infinite wisdom which selected the best means to attain his beneficent ends, and it is a proof of his omnipotence that he created every good thing according to his design, and

thereby fulfilled his will.' After Galen there is a thousand years of darkness, and both medicine and biology almost cease to have a history.

As a result of the great mathematical activity, a development of astronomical theory became possible to the Alexandrians. The consequences of the supposed rotation of the celestial sphere and of the movements of the heavenly bodies were developed along mathematical lines in a number of text-books. Thus arose a nomenclature, parts of which have survived to our day, but parts of which have been modified by the Arabian and other authors through whose hands the Greek mathematical works have passed.

- The observer regarded himself as being in the centre of the heavenly sphere (for he considered the Earth so small that his distance from its centre was as nothing to his distance from the bounds of the celestial sphere). Of this celestial sphere



he could only see half, for the other hemisphere was hidden from him by the opaque earth. The limiting circle thus imposed on his vision was the 'horizon' (from a Greek word meaning 'to bound' or 'to limit'). This horizon formed a 'great circle' on the heavenly sphere. He recognized, too, the celestial poles and the meridian great circle which passes through the zenith and the poles. The great circle at right angles to the line joining the poles was the equator. Starting from these elementary conceptions the Alexandrian observers worked out their whole astronomical system.

Among the great achievements of Alexandrian astronomy (to which we have already referred) was the attempt made by Eratosthenes (276-196 B.C.) to measure the size of the earth. Eratosthenes also made a remarkably accurate measurement of the angle which the circle of zodiacal constellations make with the celestial equator, in other words a measurement of the obliquity of the ecliptic. His estimate works out at 23 degrees 51 minutes. This is only seven minutes from the truth.

The greatest astronomer of antiquity was Hipparchus of Nicaea. He was active from 161 to 130 B.C. in Rhodes, where he erected an observatory and made most important researches. Hipparchus greatly developed the study of trigonometry. By means of this science it is possible to apply numerical calculations to figures drawn on either a plane or a spherical surface. The application of this process to astronomy is evident. Hipparchus not only made a great number of accurate astronomical observations, but also collected and collated a number

of records of previous observers to see if he could discover any astronomical changes that might have taken place in the course of the ages. These previous observations on which he was able to work were extended beyond those of the Alexandrians

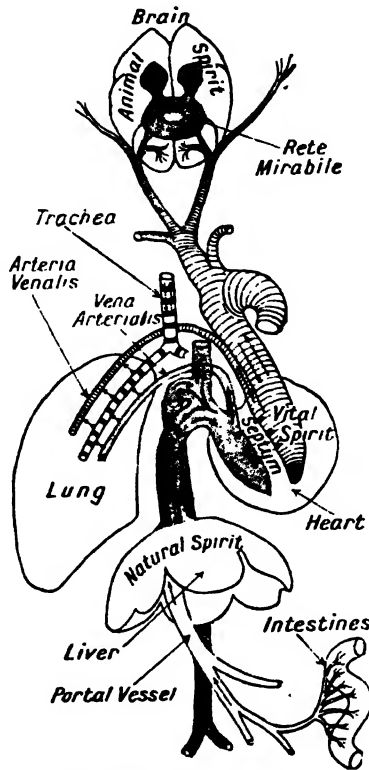
and earlier Greeks, and included the yet earlier records of the Babylonian astronomers.

Hipparchus gave the world two brilliant astronomical conceptions. One of these, the precession of the equinoxes, was of permanent value. The other, his theory of the movements of the Sun and Moon, was of value in subsequent generations for the calculation of eclipses.

In the year 134 B.C., Hipparchus observed a new star in the constellation Scorpio. This suggested to him that he should prepare a new catalogue of stars, giving their position. He thus drew up a list of upwards of a thousand stars each of which was given its celestial latitude and longitude. The constellations to which Hipparchus referred these stars are those which are to-day generally accepted.

He showed great foresight in recording also a number of cases in which three or more stars were in a line, so that he might enable astronomers of subsequent ages to detect changes in their relative positions.

Hipparchus proceeded to compare his observations with those that had been made by Timocharis and Aristyllus about 150 years earlier. He found that in this time there had been changes in the distance of the stars from the points of intersection of the circle of the ecliptic and the celestial equator, that is to say the equinoctial points. The changes were, of such an order that they could only be explained by a motion of the equinoctial points in



#### GALEN'S PHYSIOLOGY

A description of this figure, which illustrates the physiological theories worked out by Galen and perpetuated through the Middle Ages, is given in the text in page 2078.

the direction of the apparent daily motion of the stars. The knowledge of this precession of the equinoxes, and of the rate at which it takes place, was necessary for the progress of accurate astronomical observation. The appearance of this precession of the equinoxes is due to a slow revolution of the axis of the Earth round the axis of the ecliptic. This revolution takes 26,000 years.

When Hipparchus came to examine the behaviour of the planets he had before him two theories, namely, that of 'eccentric motion' and that of 'epicyclic motion.' Certain of his predecessors had adopted the epicyclic view, that is to say, they held that each planet moved on a smaller circle the centre of which itself moved upon the circumference of the greater circle at the centre of which is the Earth. Hipparchus inclined to the theory of eccentric motion, that is, that these planets moved in circles the centres of which were not the same as that of the Earth. He developed this view with great skill in connexion with the Sun and the Moon, but was less successful with the other planets. As it happened, it was the epicyclic view that prevailed in antiquity, chiefly through the mediation of the astronomer Ptolemy.

The theory of the motion of the Sun and the Moon enunciated by Hipparchus was, however, of great service in one

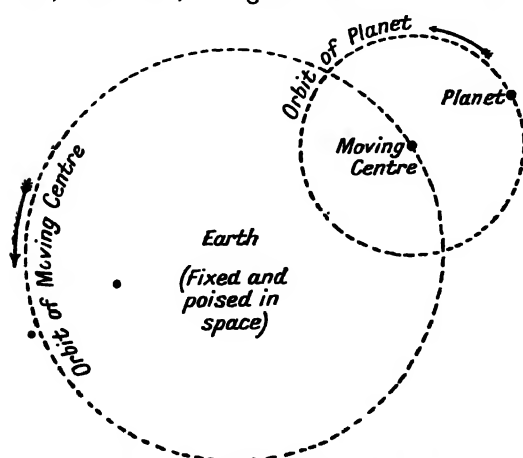
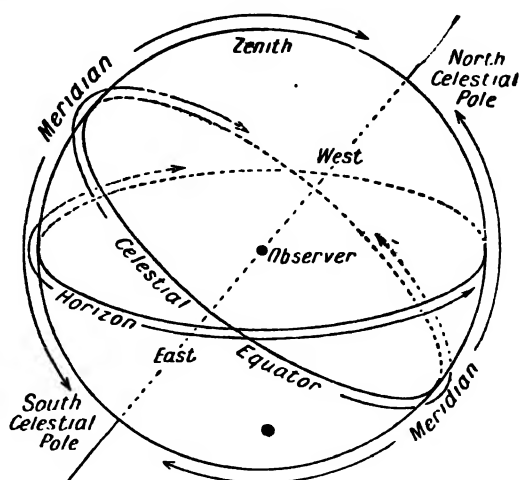


DIAGRAM OF 'EPICYCLIC MOTION.'

It was Ptolemy's theory of 'epicyclic motion' rather than Hipparchus's theory of 'eccentric motion' that finally determined medieval ideas on astronomy. In the former, planets revolve round a point itself revolving round the earth.



#### ELEMENTS OF GREEK ASTRONOMY

The astronomical scheme of the Alexandrian observers was worked out from a belief in the rotation of the 'heavenly spheres.' Though this is now discarded, the scheme, and much of its nomenclature, is still retained for convenience.

particular. Calculations based on it accorded more closely with actual observations than did calculations based on any older doctrine of their movements. Hipparchus was thus enabled to predict eclipses of the Sun and Moon more accurately than any of his predecessors. From the time of Hipparchus onward eclipses of the Moon could be predicted within an hour or two and eclipses of the Sun also, but less accurately.

There is no important name in the history of astronomy between Hipparchus and Ptolemy, who lived about the middle of the second century A.D. Ptolemy made the final synthesis of ancient astronomy. His important astronomical treatise is the source of the greater part of our knowledge of the results achieved by students of this subject in ancient times. A word must be said about the name, 'Almagest,' by which the great astronomical work of Ptolemy is always known. The chief manuscript of it carries the Greek title 'megale syntaxis' (great composition). The Arabian translators—through whom it first became known to Europe—evidently altered 'megale,' great, to the superlative form 'megiste,' greatest. Hence it became known to the Arabs as 'Al Magisti,' which gave the Latin form 'Almagestum.'

The *Almagest* is a compendium of the astronomy then known. It is based on the work of Ptolemy's predecessors, and especially on Hipparchus. It is valuable as a clear and comprehensive statement of ancient astronomy, and it represents almost the final astronomical statement until the sixteenth century. It fixed upon the Middle Ages the doctrine of the central fixed spherical Earth and the conception of the concentric spheres surrounding it, in which the planets moved

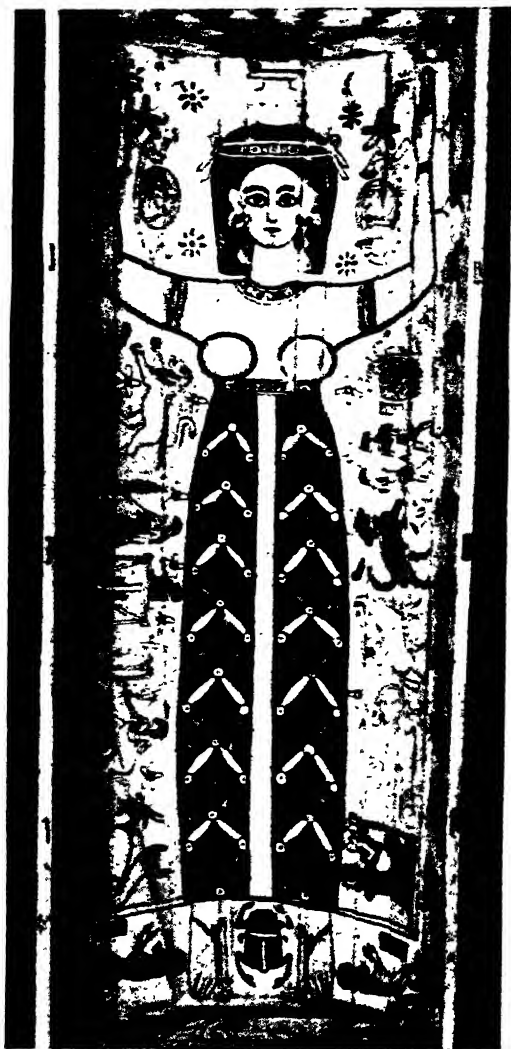
in epicycles. The astronomical views of Ptolemy were those with which the great reformers of astronomy, beginning with Copernicus, were called upon to contend.

We have now to consider the latter end of Greek science, and we cannot do so without considering astrology, the shadow of which astronomy is the substance. Believing, as the ancients did, that the Earth was the centre of the

**Final decay of  
Greek Science**

universe, it was but natural that they should also believe that the surrounding spheres influenced the surrounded body. In this sense even Aristotle is an astrologer. But over and beyond this general conception, there was developed in antiquity the conception that each of the heavenly bodies, and notably the signs of the zodiac and the seven planets, had an influence on the Earth, and especially on the life of Man.

The important philosophical and religious sect of imperial times was that of the Stoics. To it most educated Romans and Greeks of the higher class adhered (see Chap. 67). One of our best expositions of the Stoic philosophy is by the hand of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, and was written in Greek. The creed made a special appeal to the Roman mind. Stoicism seized on the astrological conception, which aided in the understanding of a determinate universe. Astrology thus became an essential part of the Stoic outlook on life. It was against this outlook that Christianity firmly set its face. We see the opposition in S. Paul. When he says, 'In him we live and move and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we also are his offspring,' he is quoting the Greek astrological Stoic poet, Aratus of Soli (271-213 B.C.). To the Church Fathers astrology was utterly abhorrent, because it seemed to them a negation of the doctrine of free will that was so dear to them. But astronomy, dead as a science, existed now only linked with astrology. With the spread of Christianity and the disappearance of the Stoic philosophy the last remains of Greek science passed into the shade, not to return until the Arabian revival and the rise of the universities in the later Middle Ages.



**THE FIGMENTS OF ASTROLOGY**

The brilliant astronomical speculations of the Greeks finally dwindled away into the shadowy realms of astrology. This Graeco-Roman sarcophagus is painted on the inside with the Zodiacal signs believed to influence mankind.

*British Museum*

# THE RIVAL RELIGIONS

A Study of the Eastern Cults with which Christianity had to compete in the later Days of the Roman Empire

By the Very Rev. W. R. INGE

Dean of S. Paul's Cathedral, London ; Author of *The Philosophy of Plotinus, the Platonic Tradition, etc.*

IN the conflict of religions within the Roman Empire, it was not Greece which won. Supreme in science and philosophy, the genius of the Hellenes had no creative force to mould the faith of the strange congeries of races which conquest, commerce and slavery scattered over all the coasts of the Mediterranean. The victory was won partly by creeds which came from the East, and partly by the stubborn local traditions which survive in Catholic Europe to this day. Greece, however, supplied the philosophy of the Christian religion, which, after Plotinus and Porphyry, had a more vigorous life within the Christian Church than in the schools of Athens. We must also remember that the syncretised religion which destroyed Graeco-Roman Paganism spoke and wrote in Greek.

It is a very unfortunate thing that the liturgical and devotional literature of the later Paganism has almost entirely perished. It is probable that if we could recover the sacred books of this period, we should find much to excite our sympathy and admiration. Together with much that was archaic and hardly intelligible, we should find hymns and prayers of great spiritual beauty, and mystical flights, fanciful indeed, but adumbrating sublime truths in the language of symbol and poetry. But this literature, like almost everything else that we should wish to know in that period when there were no historians, has been lost irreparably. The Gnostic hymns, of which we have some specimens, are interesting, but they are not what we should most value. If Asia Minor is ever properly explored, some of the old shrines, with their paintings and inscriptions, may yet come to light.

The barbarian cults of the West went down easily before Roman penetration.

Latin was adopted everywhere, though more quickly in Spain than in Gaul, and the names of the gods were changed without much resistance. Even in Africa, where the Punic language lingered till the time of Augustine, Baal became Saturn. But the East had been only superficially Hellenised, and was never Romanised. The worships of the East not only held their own ; they soon started on a career of conquest in the reverse direction to Alexander, and have left their traces to the shores of the Atlantic.

It is not difficult to answer the question why the Oriental religions spread westwards. The reason is that in religious matters the East was far more advanced than the West. The Romans, in spite of

**Why Eastern religions spread westwards**

Juvenal's horsey Lateranus, would no more have thought of worshipping Epona, the horse goddess of the Gauls, than a British Imperialist would think of building a church to Unkulunkulu, the Old, Old One of the Zulus ; but there are esoteric Buddhists even in London. The political changes of the time had almost destroyed the idea of national or racial churches, resting on real or supposed blood-brotherhood. The new conditions demanded a religion, or religions, which should be individual and universal, and this need could be supplied by the East. It could not be supplied by the conservative restoration of the Roman religion attempted by Augustus, the political and Latin character of which was too obvious. The time came when the emperors, and especially the most despotic of them, perceived the advantage of attaching the professional priesthood to their service ; they openly showed favour to the creeds of the East, as they did later to

Christianity. In this way the seeds of Caesaropapism slowly took root.

What were the chief attractions of the new cults? In the first place, they offered an assured hope of personal immortality, such as few of the old religions had ventured to assert. And in the second place, they brought with them a highly developed sacramentalism, which at this time, as at many other periods of history, made a very strong appeal to the religious

**Chief attractions of the new Cults** instincts of educated and uneducated alike. The old legalistic notion of becoming

'just before God' by the punctilious observance of the prescribed ritual gave no satisfaction to the conscience. What men and women now desired was to be purified from their sins, sometimes by the mechanical efficacy of lustrations, fastings and macerations, sometimes by the observance of holy discipline and self-denial.

These practices and disciplines, with solemn initiations into the secret 'mysteries' of the cult, brought the soul into communion with the divine principle, and assured the votary that after death he would pass into a blessed state and win eternal 'salvation.' Asceticism came in like a flood, and abstinence from meat, wine and sexual gratification was preached as essential to the higher life. The character of the priesthood in Europe was transformed when the priests became spiritual directors, wholly absorbed in their sacred functions. They assumed a distinctive dress, and no longer mingled freely in society. Pope Damasus I, who was coarsely nicknamed 'matronarum auriscalpius (ear-probe),' had many prototypes among the Pagan priesthood.

The mystery religions, as they may be called collectively, comprised every variety of cult, including some that were purely magical, and others that may have been indecent. But at their best they probably offered to their adherents a far more attractive ritual, a higher morality and sounder religious teaching than the old faiths of the Greeks and Romans. Some of them had the prestige that is derived from unquestionable antiquity.

The great Eastern religions united primitive nature myths with the dream

world of the soul, attempts at science petrified at an early stage, and alliances with philosophy. All these were at last fused into a religious view of life, and this process was the result partly of the phase through which civilization was passing, and partly of the experiences of the inner life, which, so far from sharing in the decadence that was overtaking culture generally, had never before been studied so intimately. There was much borrowing and reciprocal influence in the Hellenistic period; but the paternity of ideas is seldom traceable with certainty, and is perhaps hardly worth tracing. The same conditions produced similar and parallel developments in all the cults, including the Christian Church.

Among the ideas which are most characteristic of these religions and philosophies we may enumerate the following. The soul or spirit comes 'down' from some higher sphere. It belongs to the eternal spiritual world, whereas the body possesses a very inferior degree both of reality and of value. Changelessness and immortality are the attributes of the soul or spirit; mutability and dissolution are characteristics of the

body. In some, though **Characteristic ideas of Eastern religions** not all, of the cults the visible world is disparaged, and God is banished from it. The Godhead, as it is in itself, is unknowable, except in moments of mystic rapture.

'Matter,' which the unphilosophical construed as the world of concrete perception, was regarded as a clog and impediment to the upward flight of the soul, and redemption came to be envisaged as a deliverance from the conditions of finite and particular existence. This redemption of the soul was always said to be attainable through a number of stages, representing a gradual emancipation of the soul from the allurements and entangling alliance of the senses. Progress, the hope of which had almost disappeared from the world outside, was still possible under the form of 'introrsum ascendere' — 'rising within oneself.' The possibility of this inward ascent, even to the dazzling height of union with God, was guaranteed by the indwelling Spirit of the Deity, which transformed the human element

into the divine. 'Happy and blessed one! Thou shalt be a god instead of a mortal,' was the form in which salvation was promised to the initiates. Lastly, the old connexion of religion with patriotism and nationality was almost completely dissolved. The individual, the religious brotherhood and communion with God comprised the whole of the interests with which the mystery cults were concerned.

These composite faiths and sacramental rites were nearer to monotheism than to polytheism, and though Christianity rejected these cults primarily as 'idolatrous,' it had much in common with them. There was, however, this important difference, that while the mystery cults easily flowed together, so that a Pagan Catholic was probably initiated into two at least of them, and though we find strange instances of a blending of gods — 'theocrasia' — the statue of one god being loaded with the emblems of others, the Christians spurned all alike as diabolical. To this irreconcilable hostility we must return in a later chapter (Chap. 80).

It will be convenient to consider singly

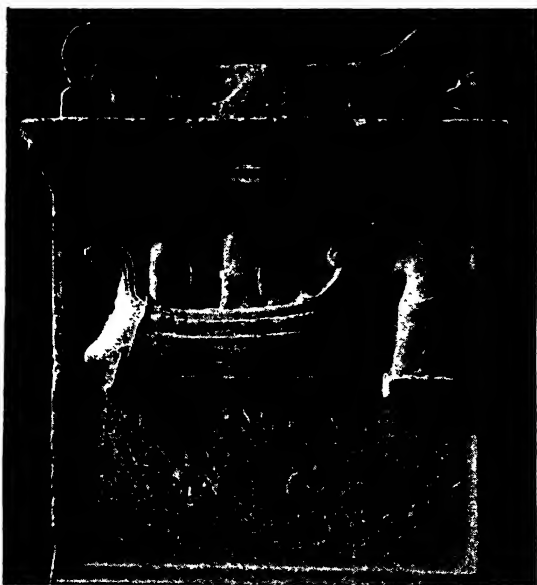
the chief Oriental religions which invaded the Roman Empire at this period, following them back to the countries of their origin — Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria and Persia; after which something will be said of Judaism and early Christianity.

The Great Mother of Pessinus and Mount Ida was not only the first invader, but nearly the last to be driven out. The history of her worship in Italy covers six centuries, and it still lived to

excite the anger of Augustine. It was while Hannibal was making his last stand before evacuating Italy that the Romans, who for once, with good reason, had a bad attack of nerves, imported, on the advice of their sacred books and by the generosity of King Attalus of Pergamum, the black stone in which the power of the goddess was supposed to reside (see Chap. 60).

She was received into the Palatine, and her priests, with their barbaric ritual, roused mingled awe and disgust among the Romans. But as the defeat of Hannibal followed immediately upon her migration, there could be no hesitation in giving her

**Cult of the Great Mother**



#### HOMAGE TO MAGNA MATER—THE FIRST ORIENTAL CULT AT ROME

According to legend, the ship that brought the sacred black stone of Magna Mater from Pergamum in 204 B.C. grounded in the Tiber and resisted men's efforts to move her. A Vestal Virgin, however, fastening her belt to the ship, drew it quite easily to the Palatine. The story is illustrated on this altar (right) of the second to third century A.D. The altar relief (left) depicts Cybele in her lion-drawn chariot roaming the woods in search of Attis, who is hidden behind a pine tree.

*Museo Campidoglio (from Rostkuff, 'Rome,' Clarendon Press) and Villa Albani, Rome (photo, Mosconi)*



PRIEST OF ATTIS AND CYBELE

Wearing oriental robes, with an image of Attis on his breast, the priest is holding a pomegranate, three twigs, a fir cone and fruits—symbols of fertility. Around him are ritual cymbals, tympanum, flute, life, scourge and cista.

*Palazzo dei Conservatori, photo, Mori.*

a temple and an annual festival in April. Lucretius gives a vivid description of the procession of the goddess, crowned with towers and drawn by lions, and of the emasculated priests. Catullus describes the frenzy and repentance of Attis in a weirdly beautiful poem. In the Augustan age the Magna Mater Cybele—Great Mother Cybele—meets us in nearly all the poets. Under the Flavian emperors the cult spread all over the Empire, from Spain to Dacia. The 'taurobolium,' a baptism in bull's blood, was part of her worship, and became common before the end of the second century.

The religion was itself syncretistic, partly Thracian and partly Phrygian. Attis was partially identified with Dionysus-Sabazius. The worship was wild and orgiastic; the votaries were excited to madness by various musical instruments and by their own shouts. They cut themselves with knives, and their priests mutilated themselves in a paroxysm of ecstasy. When the Cappadocian goddess Ma, the Anahita of the Mazdeans, became a 'follower' of Cybele, the rites became, if possible, more sanguinary and savage. Claudius seems to have been the first to allow Roman citizens to become 'archigalli'—chief priests of Cybele; he probably

could not refuse to Cybele the recognition which Caligula had lately given to *Ēsis*.

By degrees the cult lost much of its savage and repulsive character. The death of Attis, and his restoration to life, became a dramatic representation of the death to sin and the new birth to righteousness; or, in a less ethical sense, the sacramental sign of salvation. A part of the ritual was the recitation of the solemn words: 'Take courage, ye initiates, because the god is saved. For you too will come salvation from your troubles.' Attis had been a moon god, who was invoked by farmers, and also came to be associated with the underworld of the dead. But as Sabazius he became a 'supreme god,' and his worship entered into close relations with the cult of Mithras. It is possible, but not certain, that the taurobolium belongs to this fusion, for Mithras, as is well known, is regularly represented slaughtering a bull. The effect of this sacrament was supposed to be 'a new birth into eternal life'; but it was supposed by some to be efficacious for twenty years only, after which the rite should be performed again.

At the same time, the idea of a religious brotherhood, cemented by sacraments, helped to humanise this as well as other mystery cults. It may be that the priests from Phrygia still taught the barbarous notion that by 'eating the god' his worshippers absorbed his qualities. But these primitive ideas were so far transformed into metaphors that we must not brand the whole cult as fetishistic. There is an oration of Julian which shows that a vague allegorism softened the offensive features of the worship of Cybele.

**Humanisation of the mystery cults**

Nevertheless, the mystery religion of Phrygia was fatally handicapped by its savage origins. The bath of blood, the eunuch priests and the dervish-like ritual were highly repulsive to all persons of refinement. In estimating the causes of the triumph of Christianity we must not forget the advantage which the new faith possessed in starting free from these embarrassing accessories.

The great temple of the Egyptian deities was the Serapeum of Alexandria, founded

by Ptolemy Soter, Alexander's general. Perhaps even before this date Egyptian merchants had their temple to Isis in the Piræus, and her worship rapidly spread over the Greek world. The Greeks, who had traded and settled in Egypt long before the time of Herodotus, were quite convinced that the Egyptian gods were their own under other names. Isis was Demeter, Osiris Dionysus, and Horus Apollo. The Greek Orphics and Pythagoreans found the Egyptian religion congenial. The fusion of Greek and Egyptian creeds was naturally a matter of state policy with the Ptolemies. Serapis, a deity of doubtful origin, took the place of Osiris. The dog-faced Anubis was identified with Hermes the conductor of souls. But Serapis and Isis were not content with this position. Both were elevated to be the supreme gods; Serapis assuming the names and attributes of Jupiter and the Sun; Isis the character of the universal mother and creatress of the world.

The Ptolemies also welded the old creed of the Pharaohs with the Greek mysteries, and made Greek the liturgical language. They employed Athenian sculptors to substitute the dignified beauty of Greek art for the grotesque idols of the native Egyptians. These, however, were never forgotten, and the Graeco-Romans, with all the awe which they felt for the immemorial antiquity of the Egyptian religion and for the traditional learning of its priests, did not cease to jeer at the worshippers of crocodiles, dogs and cats. In spite of this, Isis worship, unlike the Phrygian cult of Cybele, was a civilized religion. Isis and Serapis were adored in Europe till the very end of Paganism.

From Sicily the cult spread to Italy in the first century before Christ. The Senate

five times tried to expel Isis from Rome, but she always returned. In 50 B.C. the consul, unable to find a workman to lay hands on the shrine of the goddess, had to take the axe himself. Even the war against Cleopatra could not keep the gods of Egypt out of Rome, though Dion Cassius says that they were banished for a time beyond the 'Pomerium'—the boundaries of the city.

Josephus mentions a moral scandal in a temple of Isis in the reign of Tiberius, which led to severe measures against the priests, but the emperor Otho openly took part in the cult, and Domitian, in A.D. 69, escaped from the Vitellians in the vestments of an acolyte. Commodus walked in procession with a shaven head and the statue of Anubis in his arms. Lucan long before this, in Nero's reign, speaks of Isis as an object of world-wide worship. There is indeed no province of the Empire in which traces of the goddess of the Nile have not been found. She had many functions. She was the goddess of fertility, and the protectress of commerce and navigation. She was also the vision of the mystic, as Apuleius, the Huysmans of antiquity, shows us in the



**ATTIS, BELOVED OF CYBELE**

Attis was commonly represented in Phrygian dress. As changed by Cybele into a pine tree he represents both spring's immortality and the new birth to righteousness.

*British Museum*

deeply devotional chapter which concludes his novel, the *Metamorphoses*.

In the Augustan age the shrines of Isis had an equivocal reputation. She was popular with the demi-monde. But later on her worship seems to have been pure, and was organized upon a plan very like that of the Catholic Church. There was a kind of pope, with white-robed shaven priests. The toilet of the 'Madonna' was attended to every day. Daily matins and evensong were sung in her temples. There was a great festival in the autumn, at which the death of Osiris-Serapis was





The holiest spot connected with the mother goddess Isis was the island of Philae, where the Ptolemies erected the great temple of Isis whose pylons and forecourt are seen on the left, and the smaller Kiosk (right) known as Pharaoh's Bed. Even after the establishment of Christianity in Egypt the worship of Isis still continued at Philae. The ruins are now submerged for five months in the year.



In the worship of Isis there were elements that made a universal appeal, and of all the pagan cults it was the most successful in maintaining itself against Christianity, surviving in Italy into the fifth century. In Rome it gained general popularity, and shrines of Isis were numerous. This chapel—of brick faced with marble—found on the Esquiline in 1883—contained a statue of Isis in the principal niche at the back; other smaller niches contained images of domestic Lares.

#### SUBMERGED TEMPLES AND DESERTED SHRINES OF THE GODDESS ISIS

lamented, while there was rejoicing over his resurrection.

In Serapis, too, were united many attributes, including those of Aesculapius, the god of faith-healing. Caracalla paid him the compliment of dedicating to him the sword with which he had killed his brother Geta. But besides the attractions of a solemn and impressive ritual, the Egyptian worship had two other charms. Isis resembled the Catholic Madonna in being an indulgent motherly goddess, to whom all troubles might be confided. And this religion was very positive in holding out hopes of immortality. An old Egyptian text makes the following promise to a votary. 'As truly as Osiris lives, shall he live, as truly as Osiris is not dead, shall he not die. As truly as Osiris is not annihilated, shall he not be annihilated.' The mystic already shares in the immortal life of Osiris.

This cult may seem to have possessed nearly all the attractions of Catholicism, and its long life shows that it really satisfied most of the religious needs of the age. But the remark that has been made about the Phrygian worship may be repeated here. Isis worship was weighted not only by the grotesque animal forms of the Egyptian gods, but by its connexion with nearly all the superstitions of the age, especially with astrology. And the elevated thoughts which Plutarch and others hang upon the images of Osiris and Isis were very easily detached when the Church offered them a better home. Still, one cannot help thinking that a founder of a fancy religion in our day might do worse than attempt a revival of the worship of the veiled goddess of Egypt, into whose mouth Proclus puts the words, 'I am that which

has been, is, and shall be. My veil none has lifted.' In A.D. 391 Theophilus patriarch of Alexandria burnt the Serapeum to the ground, and thus, as Rufinus said, destroyed 'the very head of idolatry.'

The worship of the 'Syrian goddess,' as she was often called without giving

her a name, was far less important in the Roman Empire, in spite of the large number of Syrians who penetrated everywhere and especially to Rome, so that Juvenal complains that the Orontes had flowed into the Tiber. Her name was Atargatis and she was sometimes identified with the Phoenician Astarte. Without forgetting the strange episode of a Syrian priest, El Gabal (the emperor Elagabalus), sitting for a short time on the throne of the Caesars, it would be true to say that the chief influence of Syrian religion was connected with the 'Chaldaean' fortune-tellers who imposed on the superstitious Romans of the first three centuries. The Syrians themselves worshipped their Baals wherever they lived; but it does not seem



ISIS, THE UNIVERSAL MOTHER

Isis worship was established in Italy in the first century before Christ. Goddess of fertility and protectress of commerce and navigation, she was pre-eminently the universal Mother.

Berlin State Museum

probable that they contributed anything appreciable to the amalgam of faiths which left traces on the later religion of Europe. We shall therefore be justified in passing over the Syrian cults with this very brief notice.

Far more interesting is the influence of Persia. Lucian, in one of his Dialogues of the Gods, makes Momus ask, 'Who is this Mithras, with his sleeves and tiara, who knows no Greek, and cannot even understand when one drinks his health?' Mithras, the light god, was a parvenu in the Greek pantheon, as he was in the Greek world. And yet he became so important in the Roman Empire that Renan speculated on the possibility of the



#### A PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF ISIS

This relief from a sanctuary in Rome shows the ritual implements used in the Isis cult. A priestess bearing the goddess's sacred vessel and serpent—shown on the statue in the preceding page—is followed by a scribe with the sacred book, a priest with a jar of Nile water and a maid with sistrum and ladle.

*The Vatican; photo, Mosconi*

victory of his religion over that of Christ. The early Christian writers show no such anxiety, and the best opinion now is that the diffusion of the Persian worship in the Empire has been somewhat exaggerated, striking as it undoubtedly was.

One reason why it could not win the day against Christianity is given by Harnack:

The entire domain of Hellenism was closed to it, and consequently Hellenism itself. Greece, Macedonia, Thrace, Bithynia, [the Province of] Asia, the central provinces of Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine and Egypt—none of these ever had any craving for the cult of Mithras. And these were the most civilized countries. Throughout the regions lying between the Adriatic and the Taurus, between Pontus and the cataracts of the Nile, there was never any conflict between Mithraism and Christianity!

The antipathy of the Greeks to Persia was of very long standing, and is easily understood. The attempt of Darius and Xerxes to subjugate the Hellenes was in part a religious crusade, and as such an entirely new thing in Greek experience. The Greeks could hardly believe that the destruction of their temples by the Persians was not a manifestation of wanton impiety.

But the Persians were a great nation, with a great religion, which, through Judaism, largely infected by Persian ideas, has left traces even upon Christianity. E. V. Arnold even finds 'Persian beliefs embodied in the Lord's Prayer.' Zoroaster (Zarathustra) may have been a contemporary of Buddha and Confucius (see

Chaps. 37 and 40). He came forward as a reformer of the Magian religion, and to him is attributed the dualistic doctrine of an eternal conflict between the powers of light and darkness. Dualism is a philosophy which is never likely to be extinct. To the moralist especially life is an internecine battle between good and evil. Christianity went further in this direction than the older European religions, but endeavoured to avoid metaphysical dualism, and throughout the early middle ages waged war with

Manichaeism, which was the inheritor, in this respect, of the Persian religion.

Mithraism began to be strong in the West only in the time of Commodus, who showed it favour. After this, it spread for a time very rapidly. It was the soldier's religion, being a manly creed, which laid stress on discipline and self-control. Next to the army, it was the Syrian traders and Oriental slaves who spread the worship of the Persian god. But in the third century it was for a short time the most fashionable and popular cult at Rome itself. The chief cause of this was that it fitted in very well with autocracy and emperor worship, and also encouraged the sun worship which was increasingly congenial to the Romans at this time.

The myth of Mithras sounds to us absurd enough. He was 'born from a rock,' contended with the sun, overcame him, and then swore friendship. The first creation of Ahura-mazda (see Chap. 37) had been a wild bull. Mithras held the bull by the horns and then carried him on his shoulders to a cave. The bull escaped, and was pursued and killed by Mithras. From his blood sprang corn and animals. Mithras cutting the bull's throat is the regular ornament of Mithraic shrines. The principal figures are surrounded by symbolic animals, with two youths bearing torches.

But the worship was not contemptible. Mithras was a mediator god, the judge of souls. The soul is immortal, and during earthly life is merely on probation. It came down from a heavenly abode, and

must be purified from the stains which it has contracted before it can return thither. The means of purgation are partly ritual and partly the sedulous practice of the old Persian virtues of truthfulness and courage. The initiates into the mysteries, which were celebrated in a dark underground chapel with much impressive ceremony, passed through seven grades, with imposing titles like those of Freemasonry, and probably connected with the seven planets.

Although the cult was already declining before A.D. 300, Julian attempted to revive it. After some very contemptuous remarks about

**Why Julian followed Mithras** Christ and his religion, which, he says, attracted Constantine because 'he could not discover among the gods the model of his own career,' he goes on: 'As for thee,' said Hermes to me, 'I have granted thee the knowledge of thy Father Mithras. Do thou keep his commandments, and thus secure for thyself a cable and a sure anchorage throughout thy life, and when thou must depart from the world, thou mayest with good hope adopt him as thy guardian god.'

The Christians were both puzzled and annoyed by the resemblance of the Mithraic religion to their own. Not only did Mithras have his high pontiff, his priests vowed to celibacy and his consecrated virgins, but there is to be a second coming of Mithras, preceded by great plagues. The dead will rise from their tombs to meet him. The sacred bull will be slain again, and the just will drink his blood, which will give them eternal life. Evil will be finally destroyed by fire from heaven. Finally, the Church paid Mithras the great compliment of annexing his chief festival on December 25, the birthday of the 'Invincible Sun,' and turning it into the feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ. So we owe our Christmas, or at least its date, to the religion of Persia.

The religious condition of Rome in the second and third centuries must have presented a strange spectacle. Cumont writes :

Let us suppose that in modern Europe the faithful had deserted the Christian churches to worship Allah and Brahma, to follow the precepts of Confucius and Buddha, or to adopt the maxims of the Shinto ; let us imagine a great confusion of all the races of the world in which Arabian mullahs, Chinese scholars, Japanese bonzes, Tibetan lamas and Hindu pundits would be preaching fatalism and predestination, ancestor-worship and devotion to a deified sovereign, pessimism and deliverance through annihilation—a confusion in which all these priests would erect temples of exotic architecture in our cities and celebrate their diverse rites therein. Such a dream would offer a fairly accurate picture of the religious chaos of the ancient world before the reign of Constantine.

But the ancient religions, with the exception of Judaism and Christianity, did not anathematise each other as they would to-day ; it mattered little, men thought, whether the Supreme Being were called Jupiter or Osiris or Mithras. Wendland prints at the end of his book a statuette of



**WORSHIP OF ISIS IN CAMPANIA**

The attractive ritual of the Isis cult had much to do with its wide spread. This fresco depicts a service before a sanctuary in Campania. The officiating priest stands at the stair-head holding a vessel of Nile water, while in the court below the choir chants and a priest offers sacrifice on a horned altar.

\* National Museum, Naples ; photo, Anderson

*Fortuna Panthea*, who is loaded with the various emblems of Fortune, Victory, Isis, Artemis, Aesculapius, and Castor and Pollux. The Deity liked diversity of homage. A religion was disliked only if it seemed to be savage or unpatriotic.

Before passing from Oriental religion to Hellenistic philosophy, a few words must be said about the Gnostics, who seem to occupy a position intellectually half-way between religion and philosophy, and between East and West. The word 'Gnosticism' is comparatively modern, and 'Gnostic' is not found before the last half of the second century. But 'Gnosis,' in the sense of esoteric knowledge of divine things, plays a part in the controversies of the first century after Christ. Gnosticism is not the name of a sect; the orthodox Clement of Alexandria uses the word Gnostic to designate an enlightened Christian. Harnack's phrase that Gnosticism represents an acute Hellenising of Christianity is unfortunate. 'Hellenism' at this period meant European culture, and when European culture, as manifested, for example, in Plotinus, came into contact with Gnosticism, it rejected it with indignation. The whole spirit of Gnosticism is in fact un-Hellenic, and in the second century, when it was most flourishing, it was thoroughly Oriental in type, though it belonged to a superficially Hellenised Orient.

There was, as Reitzenstein has proved, a 'Gnosticism' before Christianity, and the Hermetic writings, in their original form, belonged to this pre-Christian movement. But the most eminent Gnostics were half Christians, their religion, or philosophy, being a queer amalgam of misunderstood Christianity with the cults

which we have already mentioned. Their chief aim was that which we have found to be common to all the religious movements of the time—the deliverance of the soul from the defilements of the flesh, and salvation through union with the Divine

nature. I have called the speculative side of their teaching a barbarised Platonism, and have compared their theosophical romances with the fantastic mystical works of William Blake. For them true history is the description of shadowy personifications in the unseen world—imaginary spiritual beings arranged in pairs, which to some extent took the place of the Platonic 'Ideas.'

Jesus was one of the 'Aeons,' who, in the system of Valentinus, comes down to earth to rescue the truant Aeon 'Sophia' (the personification of the divine attribute—Wisdom), and restore her to her home in heaven. The worship of the Gnostics was ritualistic, with a strong infusion of magic. They are accused by Plotinus of despising this beautiful world, in which

a truer philosophy finds everywhere the symbols and footprints of the Divine. This renunciation of the world was part of the rigid asceticism which was the path by which those who were capable of the higher life could rise above the gross beliefs and practices of the vulgar herd. The Catholics freely accused them—and especially the Gnostic sect called Carpocratians—of dissolute practices, a charge later brought against the Brethren of the Free Spirit in the Middle Ages. The accusation is circumstantial; but it was a scurrilous age, in which no fairness was shown when dealing with opponents. Plotinus is much more moderate; he dislikes the Gnostics whom he had encountered at Rome partly because their teaching



SERAPIS AS A ROMAN DEITY

In imperial times Serapis was frequently represented as a mature bearded man standing with hand upraised in benediction, invariably he has on his head the basket symbolising plenty.

British Museum

was a kind of caricature of his own, partly for the reason already mentioned, and perhaps above all because they treated with arrogant contempt the great Greek thinkers whom he revered. We shall find that in their widely different attitudes towards the old culture lay the most irreconcilable quarrel between Christianity and the latest Paganism.

In the space at my disposal I can say only a few words about another religion which was far more important than the cults of Isis and Mithras—I mean Judaism. The diffusion of the Jews all over the eastern half of the Empire had separated them from the sacrificial system of Jeru-

salem long before the destruction of the Temple by Titus. The synagogue was now the rallying-ground of the religion. They made many proselytes, partly perhaps because the Romans gave the Jews a privileged position, but largely because their religion was far superior to those of the Pagans. There was a time when the Jews of the Dispersion were strongly Hellenised—we find proofs of this in Philo, and indeed in S. Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; but after the first century this alliance was broken, and after the suppression of the last revolt, under Bar Kokhba, proselytising seems almost to have ceased (see Chap. 69).



#### MITHRAS THE PERSIAN GOD WHO WON THE ROMAN SOLDIER'S HEART

Mithras was worshipped by Roman soldiers as the fighter, the conqueror of darkness, and of the elemental forces of nature. This fine bas-relief, found in a subterranean sanctuary to the god at Hedderheim in Germany, shows Mithras killing the bull at the order of Ahura-mazda. Right and left of him stand Cautes and Cautopates, personifications of the dawn and sunset. The event is represented as taking place in a cave, over which are carved the signs of the zodiac.

*Les archives photographiques d'art et d'histoire*



The Jews were driven back upon themselves, and in rejecting Christianity they turned their backs upon Europe. Their intense hatred against the early Church was an instinctive recoil from a movement which, though it had originated in Palestine, threatened to merge their race and their religion in the congeries of peoples and beliefs which made up the Graeco-Roman Empire. Christianity, in accepting Hellenism, transformed and was transformed by it; Judaism rejected it, and remained obstinately Asiatic till the tide turned, and Asia once more took her revenge upon Europe.

It remains to consider the evolution of genuinely Greek thought during this period. It goes without saying that

**How Greek age was very different from  
thought evolved the Athens of Plato and  
Aristotle, and that the** cosmopolitan civilization of great cities like Rome and Alexandria greatly modified the pure Attic tradition. Already in the Macedonian age we have seen Semitic influences at work in Stoicism. But it is, in my opinion, a mistake to regard the later Platonism as a fusion of Greek and Oriental ideas. Plotinus not only wished to be but was a true disciple of Plato, and if the coalescence of metaphysics and religion seems more complete in the thinker of the third century after Christ, we must remember that the earlier schools of Athens made the tendance of the soul a matter of central importance in all their philosophising. They were not, like the Ionians who preceded them, primarily interested in the philosophy of natural science.

Plato himself hated system-making, and he is a pioneer of several divergent tendencies (see Chap. -47). On the whole, the development of his thought was a rehearsal of what was to happen to his school. The Pythagorean tendency (see Chap. 44), which is so apparent in the *Timaeus* with its mathematical and astronomical speculations, the growth of devoutness and solemnity, the increasing rigour with regard to ethics, particularly in sexual matters, and the withdrawal from current politics, all foreshadow the later history of Platonism. But there was a long period of barrenness between the earlier

Stoics and Epicureans and the rise of neo-Platonism. It was a period of eclecticism, scepticism and aridity.

It became clear, however, that when a revival came, it would be theocentric, not anthropocentric like the thought of the great period, nor cosmocentric, like the speculations of the Ionians. The combination of religious mysticism with ascetic morality was favourable to Plato and the Stoa. The school of Aristotle declined rapidly after Alexander of Aphrodisias, and the Epicureans were denounced with moral indignation.

The cradle of neo-Platonism was not Athens, which at this time neither produced nor welcomed original thinkers, but the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria, where men of all nations rubbed shoulders and exchanged ideas. The tone of Alexandria was tolerant; Hadrian found the same persons worshipping Christ and Serapis. Even Buddhists gained a footing.

There was a revival of Pythagoreanism, a more intellectualised form of the old Orphic brotherhood. The neo-Pythagorean revered the Sun as the highest revelation of the supreme Deity; but he was glad to take **Revival of  
Pythagoreanism** part in almost any religious rite, and was initiated into all the great mysteries. His life was austere, his religion mystical. Pythagoreanism was a complex product. It taught the unity of all life, with an unending cycle of births and deaths. It also taught the fall of the soul from its heavenly abode, and the path of its return to God by strict discipline. Lastly it taught communion with the Divine by means of sacraments, but also by means of philosophy or intellectual enlightenment. These Pythagorean societies prepared, the way for neo-Platonism.

Plutarch is an interesting figure for us, since his writings have survived. He was a great gentleman, conservative in his opinions and yet eager to welcome light from any quarter, an excellent citizen of his little bourgeois town, Chaeronea in Boeotia, sincerely religious and very intelligent, but not a deep thinker. As a moralist, he is acutely conscious of the problem of evil, and inclines towards the

popular misunderstanding of Platonism which finds room for an Evil World Soul. In spite of this, he is no Manichaeon. He considers that the two undesirable extremes in matters of religion are atheism and superstition; but he cannot make up his mind to condemn the latter outright. It is a rheum in the eye of faith, but it is not worth while to risk putting out an eye in trying to cure it. In philosophy, he borrows what he wants from Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics.

Still more eclectic is Numenius of Apamea, who wished to embrace in his philosophy the wisdom of the Egyptians, Magi, Indians, and even of the Jews—a new thing in Greek philosophy. But if we had more documents, we might find

that Philo, the Platonising Jew, was by no means an isolated figure, and that other Greeks besides Numenius were willing to give attention to Hellenised Judaism. The Hermetic writings belong to a lower intellectual stratum. They belong to vulgar Gnosis, though some beauties have been found in the curious treatise called the *Poemander*.

Out of this strange congeries of beliefs and speculations two monuments of permanent value arose—the Christian Catechetical School of Alexandria, and the philosophy of Plotinus. I have deferred the consideration of Christianity to a later chapter (Chapter 80); but as the Christian Origen is said to have attended the lectures of Ammonius Saccas, in whose discourses the young Plotinus first saw light, a very few words about this School seem necessary here. Biblical study was their chief preoccupation; but the Greek philosophers, except 'the godless Epicureans,' were also studied. Clement is insistent that philosophy is no enemy of



#### MANY DEITIES IN ONE

In this statuette Fortuna Panthea is invested with the headdress of Isis, the wings of Victory, the quiver of Artemis, the serpent of Aesculapius, the rudder and cornucopia of Fortune and the images of Castor and Pollux.

Wendland, 'Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur.'

faith. Faith is an adventure, an experiment which ends in an experience. It leads to illumination, which is 'complex,' whereas faith and love, which is the crown of the quest, uniting the soul with the object of its desires, are 'simple.' Proclus was to say the same later.

Origen was a great scholar, who helped to destroy Gnosticism by giving the Church a true Christian Platonism. Plotinus tried to do the same service for Paganism. Both were in a sense defeated by the barbarisation of the Empire and the craving for occultism and superstition. But what was said of the Pagan thinker—'the fires on the altar of Plotinus are never put out'—might be said with equal truth of Origen.

It is difficult to outline the teaching of Plotinus, which has been of immense importance for the subsequent history of philosophy and religion, and which is still extremely significant. It was a wonderful attempt to gather into a coherent system the best results of many centuries of unfettered thought. While in intention an orthodox Platonist (not an 'Academic'—see Chap. 47—for the neo-Platonists did not accept this name), he owes much to Aristotle, the Stoa and Pythagoras; like others in his time he professes boundless respect for the great men of old. But every question was threshed out in the Seminar which gathered round him at Rome; some of his pupils were well able to state objections and urge difficulties. The 'Enneads' in which his system is expounded are unfortunately ill-arranged as well as obscure in style; but there is no serious criticism which has not been anticipated and honestly discussed in the work itself. Plotinus had not quite the genius of



Plato or Aristotle ; but it is in him that Greek philosophy culminates.

In the teaching of Plotinus the three Divine 'hypostases'—the word is often translated as 'persons,' but this is misleading—are 'the One,' 'the Good' or 'the First'; 'Nous,' which, to avoid the common mistake which finds 'intellectualism' in the system, I prefer to translate 'Spirit,' instead of 'Reason' or 'Intelligence'; and Soul. The One, the Absolute, is purely transcendent, being above even the distinction of subject and object. He is the source

**The Trinity of neo-Platonism** from whom all Being proceeds; Eckhart in like manner distinguishes between the Godhead, of whom nothing can be predicated, and God, the Three Persons of the Trinity. It is a necessary result of the neo-Platonic dialectic that we cannot stop short of absolute unity, though we are obliged to put this 'beyond Being.' Spirit and the Spiritual World are one; they correspond exactly to each other; but there could be no existence if thought and its object were not so far held apart that they remain thought and object. In the One this distinction is transcended; and in consequence the perfected Spirit can still pray and aspire. 'All things pray,' says Proclus, 'except the First Principle.'

But Plotinus has another reason for believing in the Absolute One. He has had experience of the formless trance, which like other mystics he regards as the supreme experience of the spiritual life. What can this trance, in which the mind seems to be raised above all distinctions of mine and thine, of this and that, be except a momentary exaltation above the limitations of existence, a vision of the One who is also the Good? We must not exaggerate the importance of this swoon into the Infinite; it is spoken of as an exceedingly rare phenomenon, and of very brief duration. Still less must we follow those who translate 'the One' by 'God.' Plotinus never thought of equating the One with the God of normal worship. The One is the 'utterly ineffable Beginning' of all things, including the gods.

The real centre of the neo-Platonic system is the Second Principle, 'the One-

Many,' which consists of 'Noëta' and 'Nous,' the spiritual world and the Spirit which perceives it. This is the heaven of Plotinus, a rich life in which the soul breathes the atmosphere of eternity, and is conversant with the eternal thoughts of the Creator, who makes our beautiful world to reflect his own beauty and goodness. In this world live the spirits of just men made perfect; and they know each other through and through, thinking each other's thoughts and living in perfect unity, for in heaven there is no time or space to separate kindred souls from each other. Individuality is maintained, we know not how, without separation. We shall be departing a little from the language, but not from the thought of Plotinus, if we say that his spiritual world is a kingdom of values—Truth, Beauty and Goodness. These values are not unrealized ideals, or creations of the mind. They are objective facts, realized in the eternal world which can never be separated from the Divine mind which lives in it.

It is worth while to lay special stress on this part of the Plotinian system, because most modern commentators have neglected it. They have supposed that neo-Platonism affirms a dualism—that it teaches us that there are **No dualism** two worlds, the unreal world **in Plotinus** of sense-perception, and the supra-real world of the undifferentiated Absolute. Thus we pass from one unreality to another. This kind of criticism has been, rightly or wrongly, passed upon Indian philosophy; but it is wholly out of place in dealing with Plotinus. He leaves us in no doubt whatever where reality is to be found: it is to be found in that eternal world which is the home of Spirit, and which may also be the home of Soul when it has been raised to Spirit.

The Third Person in the neo-Platonic Trinity is not the aggregate of individual souls, but the Soul of the All. Soul is an energy thrown off by Spirit, not sharply distinguished from it (there are **no hard lines or steep steps in Plotinus**), but on a lower plane, since Soul is conscious of unfulfilled desire; it yearns to return to the untroubled world of Spirit. Soul stands midway between the phenomenal

world, of which it is the principle, and the world of Spirit, which is its principle. It has a foot in either world, and is the wanderer in the field of reality. 'It binds extremes together,' and is the meeting-point to which all lines converge. It is, in fact, a microcosm; and since 'Soul is ourselves,' each human being is a microcosm, and has affinities with every grade of Being, from the highest to the lowest.

The World Soul, however, is not in the world; rather the world is in it. 'The life of the world' is an energy of Soul, which is both its creator and the providence which watches over it. Its energy descends as low as vegetable life, and slumbers even in stones. Plotinus thus escapes cutting the world in half; he knows no generic difference between what we call dead and living matter. Modern science seems to be coming round to his view.

Each man's self is determined by the principle with which he energises. The discipline of the philosophic life, which begins with the 'civil virtues,' and proceeds with arduous purification from the trammels of the sensuous and sensual, has for its object and result the enlightenment of the understanding, which advances *par passu* with our moral and spiritual progress. When the 'soul becomes spirit,' its task is achieved,

**Ultimate Goal of the Philosopher** though the vision of the One, which is described as the pearl of great price, conferring bliss unutterable and inspiration when it has passed, remains as an object of desire even 'in heaven,' where the soul lives 'ever attaining and ever striving upward.' At the other end of the scale is what we can only call by the most misleading name 'matter'; for matter in Plotinus is not material; it is the residuum when all that gives life, meaning and substance has been withdrawn.

The conflict with evil, according to him, is rather a process of emancipation from what is alien to the soul than a struggle with a hostile spiritual power. Human wickedness is never absolute. 'Vice is still human, being mixed with something contrary to itself.' 'All virtue is a cleansing.' Spirit is sinless, and so is the higher soul. It follows that though a bad man

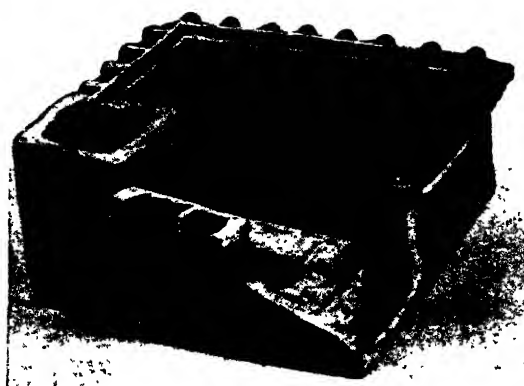
may lose his soul, the soul that he loses is not the soul that would have been his if he had not been a bad man. Personality, it will be seen, is a fluid concept. We have to gain our souls.

This sketch may be enough to indicate the nature of the religion in which Hellenism gave its last message to the world. We can hardly blame the later Platonists for not making more of social reform and the kingdom of God

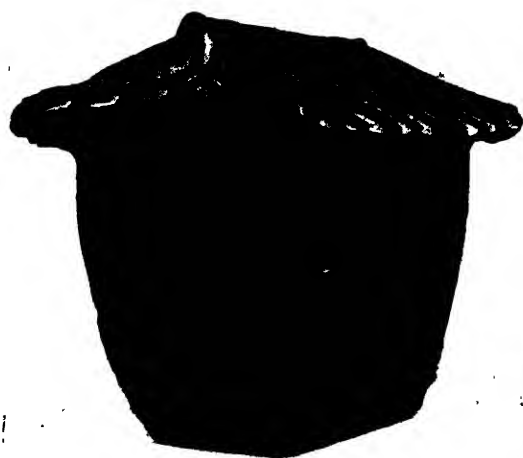
upon earth; for what Christianity and Platonism compared for such aspirations in

an age of tyranny and military pronouncements? But in comparing this system with Christianity, we note its inferiority in one particular. The neo-Platonic saint was isolated from his fellows, so far at least as to be independent of them. This ambition to be completely independent characterises, as I have said, all ancient philosophy; the religion of Christ gives up this invulnerability, and thus shows both a deeper love and a higher courage. This divergence is connected with the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation—the voluntary 'coming down' of the higher principle to redeem the lower. Plotinus and his school could never quite make up their minds whether the soul sinned in 'coming down' to the lower sphere. Augustine, for whom Plotinus was a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ, was right in finding here the main difference between Platonism and Christianity. 'The Word made flesh—that I found not among them.'

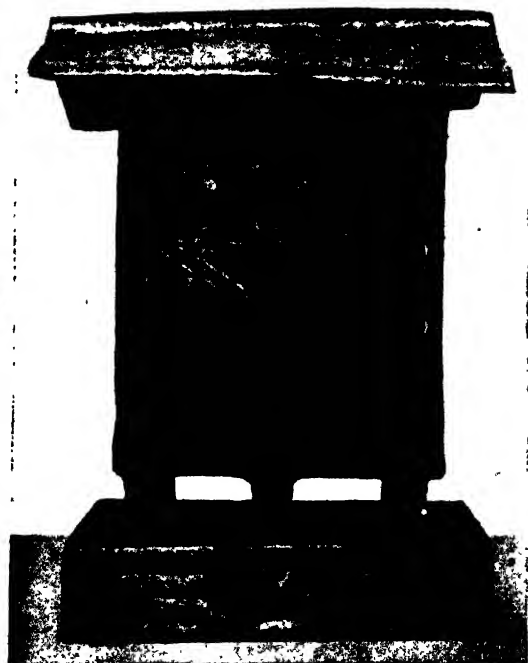
But on the whole there was not much to divide the philosophic Pagan from the philosophic Christian, except their attitude towards the old culture. We can understand the passionate grief with which the Pagans watched their civilization, so old and so cultured and so beautiful, dying; and we can also understand the indifference of the Christian Church to the passing away of a regime whose last word to the Christians had been 'non licet esse vobis'—'you are not allowed to exist.' For the struggles, the rise and the ultimate victory of this unlicensed sect, this 'third race,' as the Romans called them, who were neither Pagans nor Jews, we must turn to Chapter 80.



At the top is a model of a farm shed with something, possibly a rice pounder, in the far left corner; lower, a pig-sty with a farrow sow.



Ornamental brick found near Kaifeng in Honan. It is covered with stamped designs to resemble the outside of a sentry-guarded gateway tower.



Like the Egyptian river-valley civilization, and apparently unlike that of Mesopotamia, it was the Chinese custom to place in the dead man's tomb models of what might be of use to him in the next world—flocks, servants, implements and even houses. All the objects in this page are of Han Dynasty date (206 B.C.—A.D. 220). Immediately above are pottery models of a house (left) and a shrine (right); the former is inscribed, 'made in the first year of Yung P'ing,' i.e. A.D. 58.

#### MODELS THAT SHED LIGHT ON CHINESE LIFE IN THE TIME OF THE HANS

*British Museum*

# CHINA'S EXPANSION AND ITS WESTWARD PRESSURE

Social Aspects and External Repercussions of the Great Period of Chinese Power under the Han Dynasty

By LIONEL GILES D.Litt.

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THE beginnings of Chinese civilization are not easily determined; they stretch back so far as to be lost in a haze of myth and legend. But there is no good reason for doubting the evidence of ancient records which represent the Chinese people as having already emerged from the pastoral stage in the third millennium B.C. and settled in the basin of the Yellow River. The establishment of the Chou dynasty, a thousand years later, found China still quite a small nation, but it marks the beginning of a new era, during which the institutions of the people as known to us to-day gradually took shape.

The great teacher Confucius lived about 500 B.C., and after him came a succession of thinkers and writers whose work may compare with that of the Greek philosophers who flourished at about the same time. Intellectually, China then stood almost on a par with Greece, and far ahead of any other country in the world. But her civilization was hardly felt beyond her own borders: she had no Alexander to carry her ideas abroad.

The chief cause that prevented China from blossoming out as a world power was her condition of internal division and discord. This, again, was due to the feudal system by which the whole country was split up into a number of semi-independent states, held together only by a nominal bond of allegiance to a suzerain who had long been too weak to enforce obedience to his commands. During the latter part of the Chou dynasty, however, feudalism had gradually been giving way. The lesser states were conquered and absorbed by their powerful neighbours,

until only six remained to confront the steady aggrandisement of the Ts'in (Ch'in) state. After a bitter struggle these also succumbed, and the unification of China was completed by the great man who assumed the title of First Emperor.

The importance of this event cannot easily be overstated. Chinese writers, in stressing the methods of ruthless cruelty employed by the tyrant in his reorganization of the Empire, hardly seem to realize either the magnitude of his task or the conditions that rendered its accomplishment imperative. It was, indeed, a question whether China could achieve political unity in time to save herself from the external enemies that were then threatening her borders. Had not a strong hand put an end to the civil warfare that was sapping her strength, it is more than probable that she would have perished piecemeal.

Frequently during the Chou period we hear of incursions by barbarian tribes from the west and north-west; these may have been the **Movements of forefathers of the Hsiung-nu, the Hsiung-nu** those formidable nomads who for several centuries were in perpetual conflict with the Chinese, and mysteriously vanished from Eastern Asia only to reappear in Europe as the Huns of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. Although the Hsiung-nu suffered a great defeat at the hands of the First Emperor's general Mêng T'ien, who drove them back to the north of the desert and proceeded to build the protective barrier known as the Great Wall, their power was by no means broken, and continued to increase during the next hundred years. Repulsed for the time



### SPHERE OF CHINESE INFLUENCE IN THE DAYS OF THE HANS

Although little notice is usually taken of it by western historians, the history of China in the centuries before and after the Christian era has the same world importance as that of the Roman Empire. Repulsed by Shih Hwang Ti (c. 215 B.C.), the barbarian Hsiung-nu turned upon the Yueh-chih and started the series of movements that at last threw Parthia and Rome into conflict; while they themselves reappeared in Europe as the Huns after crushing defeats by the powerful armies of the Hans.

being, however, from the Chinese frontier, they began to exert lateral pressure on neighbours to the east and west.

Their 'shan-yü,' or chieftain, Baghdur, first attacked the Tungusic tribes of eastern Mongolia and crushed them so completely that they practically ceased to exist. He then turned his attention to the Yueh-chih, an Iranian people who were occupying what is now the western portion of Kansu province. Each year they were harried and driven farther from their ancient home, until they had crossed the T'ien Shan and forced their way past Issekul and Tashkend into Sogdiana. Having reached the Sea of Aral, they turned south-east, conquered Bactria in 139 B.C., and ultimately founded the Kushanor Ephthalite Empire south of the Oxus (see Chap. 49). Their king, Kadphises I, invaded Parthia and Afghanistan, and his son finally conquered the Punjab. The Parthians, on the other hand, reacting to the pressure from the east, were forced into their age-long contest with Rome. All this may be regarded as an indirect consequence of the First Emperor's victory over the Hsiung-nu.

Another result, of the first importance for the Chinese, was the mission of Chang Ch'ien, who was sent to discover the whereabouts of the Yueh-chih after their

long trek, in order to conclude an alliance with them against their old enemies the Hsiung-nu. Although unsuccessful in this particular, Chang Ch'ien was the first Chinese official to reach Bactria, where his attention was also drawn to the existence of India, and he brought back invaluable information about the states of central Asia, hitherto almost unknown to the Chinese. This was really the beginning of regular trade between China and the West, most of which seems to have passed through the Jade Gate near Tun Huang, across the Gobi and Taklamakan deserts to Khotan and Kashgar.

In order to make this trade route secure, it was necessary to deal a smashing blow at the Hsiung-nu power, which had revived and become more menacing than ever. Hence the far-reaching campaigns of 127 to 119 B.C., in the course of which the Chinese penetrated to Urga. A chain of fortified posts was thrown far out into the desert towards Lopnor, and a wedge was thus driven between the hordes of Tibet and the Hsiung-nu. This operation was popularly known as 'lopping off the Tartar's right arm'; and that it was effective is shown by the remarkable punitive expedition undertaken in 102 B.C., when the

**Sweeping victories  
in the west**

Chinese arms were borne triumphantly as far as Kokand. The Great Wall was extended at this time to a point seventy miles west of the oasis of Tun Huang. It is along the ruins of this ancient wall that Sir Aurel Stein discovered a large number of inscribed wooden tablets which throw much light on the organization of the Chinese forces guarding the frontier. An important feature of the defence appears to have been a system of watch-stations and beacons, whence the approach of an enemy was signalled by smoke in the daytime and by fire at night.

It may seem a matter for wonder that the Chinese, who have always been noted for their pacific temperament, should have been in art of war capable of such sustained military efforts. But it must not be forgotten that they had but lately emerged from a period of constant fighting, which had left them, as a nation, possessed of unrivalled experience in the art of war. As early as 500 B.C., long before Rome was anything more than a rude and uncivilized petty state, the leading principles of strategy had been formulated by the military writer Sun Wu with such accuracy and insight that his work may still serve as a trustworthy guide to the soldier of to-day. Formidable opponents though the Hsiung-nu must have been, they were no match in numbers, intelligence or tenacity of purpose for a great civilized nation like the Chinese, once they had composed their domestic quarrels.

When the Han dynasty began its course, Rome was just emerging from the Second Punic War, which assured to her the mastery of the Mediterranean world. Four hundred years later, the House of Han was tottering to its fall, while the Roman Empire had already outlived its most prosperous days. But in China, though the dynasty perished, the nation remained sound at heart and was destined to revive all its ancient glories.

The intense gloom of the Dark Ages that succeeded in Europe had indeed a certain parallel in China during three or four centuries, when the northern half of the country was under Tartar rule; but the light of learning and civilization was never fully eclipsed, much less extinguished; and at most it would be permissible to call that period the 'Twilight Ages.'

There is a strong outward resemblance between the vicissitudes of the Roman Empire and those of China under the Han dynasty. In each case we find a civilization enisled, so to speak, in a sea of barbarous or semi-barbarous tribes, an inner ring of whom were by degrees conquered or pacified. The second century B.C. was for both countries an era of expansion and conquest, which was followed by a century of consolidation, wealth and prosperity. The civil wars in Rome which led to the downfall of the Republic are comparable to the widespread disturbances caused at a somewhat later date by the usurper Wang Mang. The restoration of order under Kuang Wu, who came to the throne in A.D. 25, corresponds to the assumption of the imperial dignity by Augustus, and during the next hundred years the power and prestige of both empires reached their zenith.



#### HEADQUARTERS FORT AT THE JADE GATE

\*An extension of the Great Wall of China, built of stamped clay and reed fascines, stretched westwards past An-hsi and Tun Huang towards Lopnor. Built c. 100 B.C., it was defended at intervals by watch-towers and forts; the ruined fort above is that at the 'Jade Gate' on the trade route to Kashgar.

From Sir Aurel Stein, 'Desert Cathay,' by permission of India Office

More remarkable still, the introduction of Buddhism into China seems to have nearly coincided with the arrival of the first Christian missionaries in Rome; and each of these new religions was destined to exercise a profound influence on national manners and habits of thought. Yet, in spite of these similarities, the ensuing history of the two nations was so strikingly different that it will be instructive to inquire later on into the causes that tended to preserve the one civilization while the other sank steadily into decay.

At the close of its feudal period China was already a large and populous state, as may be gathered from an official census return of the year A.D. 2. The total number of households was then rather more than twelve millions, and of individuals just under sixty millions, so that the average number of persons in each family was nearly five. In A.D. 140, in consequence of civil wars and declining prosperity, the total population had sunk to less than fifty millions, and the households to something over nine and a half millions, the

ratio between the two thus remaining fairly constant.

It was a time of many inventions and improvements. The old cumbrous style of writing was simplified, and the characters were

now traced in ink with a hair-pencil instead of a stylus or a piece of frayed bamboo (see page 1071). First silk, and then paper made from vegetable fibres and rags, were substituted for the wooden tablets hitherto used. The

**An age of many inventions**

result was the multiplication of books and a consequent spreading of education. During the Chou dynasty—certainly at the time of Confucius—chairs were quite unknown, and people squatted on mats laid on the ground. A relic of this custom is the use of the word 'mat' in the sense of 'banquet,' which has persisted down to the present day. In the Han period, besides couches, a sort of arm-chair or settee was introduced, on which, however, it was still usual to sit cross-legged. Small tables were also used, but chairs of the modern type did not appear until much later.

The staple foods do not seem to have differed greatly from those of the present day. The most notable dietetic change has been the gradual substitution of tea for wine. Though the tea plant was known to the Chinese at an early date, the infusion of the leaves to serve as a beverage is not heard of until the third century A.D. Wine, on the other hand, or rather some sort of alcoholic drink made from cereals, is mentioned in very ancient documents. Koumiss or fermented mare's milk, was borrowed from the Tatars, but wine in the accepted sense of the term, that is, the fermented juice of the grape, first came into vogue after the return of Chang Ch'ien from the West. A curious little dialogue entitled 'A Dispute between Tea and Wine,' in which their relative merits are discussed, has survived in one of the T'ang manuscripts brought from central Asia.

Under the Han dynasty the Chinese people enjoyed with few interruptions the blessings of a settled government and internal peace such as it had not known for many centuries. This, coupled with the spread of Confucianist doctrine and its application in the moral sphere, brought about a general softening of manners, which showed itself in the abolition of more savage punishments, such as the mutilation of criminals. This tendency was



#### WORK OF THE HAN POTTERS

These models of a head (right) and a woman carrying a child on her back, both of unglazed grey pottery, show the rude vigour of the potter's art; which, however, lagged behind metal work in its technique throughout Han times.

*British Museum*

soon strengthened by the influence of Buddhism, a religion which played a part somewhat similar to that of Christianity in the West, though less aggressive and revolutionary in its aims and methods; it percolated almost imperceptibly into the stream of national life, and succeeded in establishing itself among the Chinese as no other foreign religion has done. The success of Buddhism was due largely to its flexibility, its willingness to develop in harmony with native ideas. Down to the end of the Han dynasty, however, it did not appear much on the surface, but was busy extending its roots, keeping aloof from political propaganda and avoiding any interference with national sentiment that might provoke a reaction.

One of the causes that favoured the acceptance of the new religion was the marked similarity between many of its tenets and those of the native system of Taoism. This strange mixture of philosophy and superstition—it can hardly be called a religion—seems to have been galvanised into new life by the advent of the Buddhist missionaries, and its devotees very soon set about copying the more popular and attractive features of the rival creed. The reputed founder of Taoism was a shadowy figure called Lao Tze, who is supposed to have been an older contemporary of Confucius in the sixth century B.C. (see also Chap. 40). He propounded a doctrine of quietism, *laissez-faire* and general conformity with nature, which could have very little meaning for the masses, and was at first regarded simply as a somewhat eccentric offshoot of Confucianism. While the Confucianists, however, maintained a strictly conservative attitude and made no attempt to disguise their aristocratic



POMP OF A ROYAL PROCESSION

Eight incised stone slabs found on a hill in Shantung probably belonged to the ancestral temple of some prince of the first century B.C. These rubbings, which are almost consecutive, show a procession wherein musicians with drums and pipes in a canopied two-horse carriage precede the king in his four-horse chariot (top).

From Chavannes, *'La Sculpture sur Pierre en Chine'*

leanings, the Taoists found means to transform their original doctrines in such a way as to appeal to the ignorant and credulous multitude.

Certain mystic and ambiguous sayings of Lao Tze were interpreted to mean that it was possible for man to prolong his life indefinitely, and finally, by strict attention to diet, regulation of the breath, the taking of drugs, especially cinnabar, and other exercises, both physical and mental, to shake off the trammels of flesh altogether and become a 'hsien' or immortal. Then, in virtue of his etherealised body, he might either rise up to heaven or remain voluntarily on earth for a certain period—sometimes hundreds of years—in order to transmit the secret of immortality to his fellow men. This belief gained an extraordinary hold on popular imagination, and numberless instances are recorded of fortunate mortals who actually succeeded in 'attaining Tao,' as it is called, and passed from this world to a higher sphere of activity in the clouds.

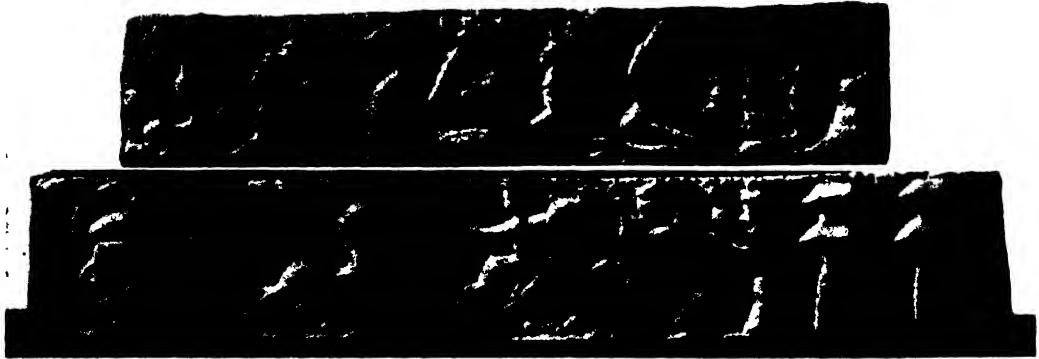
The belief in a spirit world which man must propitiate by offerings or circumvent by crafty devices has always been deeply ingrained in the people of China, and we



know that wizards and exorcists were commonly consulted even by the educated classes. The emperors Shih Hwang and Wu Ti, both rulers of great capacity, fell completely under the sway of Taoist charlatans laying claim to supernatural powers, and were actually persuaded to send out well equipped expeditions into the Eastern Ocean to search for the Islands of the Blest, the abode of 'hsien,' where the plant of immortality was supposed to grow. There seems, however, to have been little in the way of organization that would entitle the body of the faithful to be regarded as a distinct sect or church until the closing years of the first century A.D., when a remarkable man named Chang Tao-ling arose.

line of 'Celestial Preceptors' which sprang from this man has been likened to that of the popes at Rome; but the first holder of the office and his immediate successors seem to have been actuated less by spiritual motives than by ambition.

Like other Taoists, he eagerly engaged in the quest for longevity, and dissipated most of his fortune on the drugs he required for compounding the elixir of life. Then, hearing that the inhabitants of the remote district of Szechwan (Szechuen) were simple and credulous folk, he migrated thither with a small following of disciples, and began to organize a miniature state based on Taoist principles. Among other regulations an annual levy of rice amounting to five bushels per head



#### POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS SUCH AS RAN RIOT IN TAOIST PHILOSOPHY

The superstitions—fairy-tales would be a better and less contemptuous term—which were grafted on to Taoist philosophy to suit the popular temper are illustrated by stamped bricks from Han tombs of Szechwan. These probably show the fairy Hsi Wang Mu, the 'Royal Mother of the West,' with her attendants (lower), and other strange fancies such as the 'moon frog' and 'moon hare' (top right).

*British Museum*

The history of Taoism in the Han period is intimately connected with the Chang family. To begin with, Chang Liang was one of the 'Three Heroes' to whom the foundation of the dynasty was chiefly due; a trusted counsellor of Liu Pang (afterwards the emperor Kao Tsu), he also achieved fame as a Taoist adept. His son, owing to misconduct, was deprived of the marquissate conferred on his father; and the family sank into obscurity and poverty that lasted many generations, until Chang Tao-ling, who was born in A.D. 34, and is said to have reached the patriarchal age of a hundred and twenty-two, laid the foundations of a Taoist hierarchy, which has survived to the present day. The

was imposed on the people, and earned for him the opprobrious epithet of 'Rice-thief.' His ideas were developed and his work carried on even more energetically by his grandson Chang Lu, who ruled over a large tract of country without let or hindrance for thirty years. Two other members of the same family, Chang Chiao and Chang Hsiu, also collected followers round them and set up similar states in different parts of China. The former, not content with religious propaganda, harboured treasonable designs against the ruling dynasty; styling himself the Yellow God, he fomented the rebellion of the Yellow Turbans (so called because of the badge worn by the insurgents) which, though

crushed, initiated a period of anarchy that proved fatal to the House of Han.

Some curious rites practised by these men in healing the sick are described in the standard histories. Thus, in the 'Great Peace Religion' promulgated by Chang Chio, 'the officiant would utter mystic prayers, holding a nine-jointed bamboo wand, after which he bade the sick kneel and meditate on their sins. Then he would give them magic water to drink. If the sick person gradually got better, he would say, "This man is a believer in Tao," but if there was no improvement, it was put down to his not being a true believer.' Chang Hsiu's system was very similar; only he provided in addition 'Chambers of Tranquillity' in which he made the patients remain while they meditated on their sins. He also appointed Inspectors of Morals whose procedure was as follows: the name of the sick person was written down, together with his confession of guilt, and three copies were made. The first was dispatched to heaven, being placed on the top of a mountain; the second was buried in the earth, and the third was dropped into water. These were called 'autographs for the Three Powers.'

This interesting religious movement has been dwelt on at some length, not only because it was the origin of the Taoist Church as an organic body, but because

it helps to illustrate the conditions of the age: the increasing feebleness of the central government, the simplicity and credulity of the common people, and the skill with which adventurers and zealots were able to turn these favourable circumstances to their own advantage. Most of the long series of rebellions that have devastated China are traceable to the same causes that provoked the uprising of the Yellow Turbans.

Yet it must be admitted that some beneficial results flowed from the administration of the Changs. We are told that 'the districts they governed were remarkable for orderliness; roads and bridges were kept in decent repair, cesspools were drained, brambles were cut away, and, in short, there was no useful work to which the people did not put their hand.'

The creation of a public spirit such as one rarely finds among Chinese peasants speaks highly for the administrative wisdom of the reformers. Coercion would certainly not have carried them very far; and we are expressly told that Chang Tao-ling disliked the infliction of punishment, and tried to govern the people by appealing to their sense of shame.

More potent, perhaps, than religious ferment or any other external



INTIMATE GLIMPSE OF LIFE IN A HUMBLE CHINESE HOMESTEAD

These well-modelled objects from a tomb in Honan may be of T'ang Dynasty date (618-906), but are very probably earlier, say of the Six Dynasties period (220-587). The strange attitude of the large figure shows that he was intended to bestride a horse; the two smaller ones are a male and a female attendant. But what is to be noted is that they come from a definitely humble grave, and suggest what one might expect to find in a royal or princely tomb.

British Museum

cause in bringing about the downfall of the Han dynasty was the corruption existing within the imperial palace. So long as the occupant of the throne was a man of strong character who could exercise personal control over state policy, the Chinese system of monarchy—unlimited only in theory, since the representations of responsible ministers could not lightly be set aside by an emperor, however autocratic—worked well enough in practice. But the accession of a minor, often deliberately engineered by interested persons, might entail the appointment of his mother as regent, whereby cross-currents of intrigue were at once set in motion.

The interference of a dowager empress in state affairs was particularly to be dreaded, because it was impossible for a woman to enter into direct communication with her ministers; everything had to be done through the medium of eunuchs, with the most disastrous results. It became fatally easy for the more influential eunuchs to usurp the real power in the state, which they generally abused; and the degradation of the imperial dignity led to widespread discontent, and frequently to overt rebellion. The ascendancy of the eunuchs increased steadily from the very beginning of the later Han period, and became a serious menace towards the end of the first century A.D. During the years 147–189 they were the real masters of the state, and their crimes were so flagrant that a plot was hatched for their total extermination. More than two thousand were slain, but it was already too late to save the dynasty, which perished in a welter of bloodshed and confusion.

The Western Roman Empire outlived the Han dynasty by some two hundred years, but then it disappeared for ever. China, on the other hand, suffered only a temporary set-back, and under the Sui and T'ang dynasties emerged from her 'bath of storm' more vigorous and powerful than before. Some points which will help to explain this remarkable vitality may be briefly considered. In the early stages the growth of China was extremely slow, and depended less on conquest than gradual penetration and

absorption. It took the Chinese, a nation of small peasant proprietors firmly rooted to the soil, at least two thousand years to spread over the whole area of what we now call China proper. The slowness of this process enabled them to assimilate the aboriginal inhabitants more or less thoroughly, so that in point of racial stock there is no great distinction between one part of the country and another. At the opening of the Han dynasty China was essentially a homogeneous nation.

The extension of Roman rule, first over Italy and then throughout the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, was effected solely by force of arms and therefore proceeded with much greater rapidity. But even in Italy itself, and especially in the capital, the great majority of the population were, by the time of Julius Caesar, not Roman citizens but alien slaves, chiefly Greek or Asiatic, with little interest in the stability of the state.

Neither under the Hans nor at any subsequent time has the curse of slavery afflicted China to anything like the same extent. Prisoners of war never formed more than an insignificant fraction of the population, and the bulk of the slaves consisted of native Chinese sold in childhood, especially during periods of famine, to become members of wealthier families. Generally speaking, too, their lot was by no means so hard. Slavery in its mildest form as in the Roman world: there were no slave-markets, nor were slaves usually treated with brutality; they have never been regarded as mere chattels nor placed outside the pale of humanity. Moreover, male slaves could always regain their freedom by purchase, while slave girls, who were much more numerous and really took the place of hired domestics, were in most cases married off at a suitable age, thus becoming free. It would appear, then, that the term 'slavery' had quite different connotations in East and West.

On the whole, it may be said of China that her civilization was indigenous and truly national, whereas Roman civilization, borrowed largely from the Greeks, was hardly more than skin-deep. Long political experience evolved a form of government in China which was suited to

the genius of her people and therefore had in it the elements of stability. In Rome, the system of dual consulship broke down under new conditions to which it was unsuited; and the principate of Augustus and his successors, adopted as a measure of necessity, fitted so awkwardly with republican traditions that its existence had to be disguised as much as possible.

Another factor, of course, that cannot be ignored, though it should not be exaggerated, in accounting for China's exemption from the fate of other great empires, is her geographical position. Protected on the north and north-west by trackless deserts or vast stretches of prairie land, cut off from Burma and Tibet by huge mountain barriers, and bounded in the south by the unwarlike kingdom of Annam, she was not obliged to overtax her strength by the constant maintenance of large armies along her frontiers. As for her extensive coast-line it was never seriously threatened until the advent of Europeans and the rise of modern Japan.

It is natural to conclude this comparative study with an inquiry as to the intercourse that may have taken place between

the two empires that were separated by a whole continent. Prosperous conditions in

China itself have generally been reflected in a corresponding outward expansion, and two such forward movements, in particular, mark the Han period. The first, as we have seen, came after the decisive struggle with the Hsiung-nu in the reign of Wu Ti; the second after the revival of the dynasty in the first century A.D., when a series of brilliant campaigns was conducted in central Asia by the great general Pan Ch'ao. Although the expedition to Kokand (a part of the first 'forward movement') opened up the trade routes to the West, and it is certain that Chinese wares, especially silk, furs and iron, were soon afterwards brought in large quantities to the Roman market, there is no evidence that the two nations had any direct intercourse or were more than vaguely aware of each other's existence. But nearly two centuries later, when the Romans were firmly established at Antioch and the eastern portion of the

Roman Empire was known by report to the Chinese under the curious designation of Ta Ts'in or Ta Ch'in (see also page 1991), Pan Ch'ao actually sent one of his lieutenants on a mission to Syria. The passage in the Later Han History runs thus:

In the ninth year of the Yung-yuan period of the reign of Ho Ti [A.D. 97], the General Protector Pan Ch'ao sent Kan Ying on an embassy to Ta Ts'in. When he arrived in T'iao-chih, near the coast of the Great Sea, and was about to take ship there, some sailors from the western district of Parthia spoke to him as follows: 'The waters of the ocean are very wide, and a traveller takes three months to get across even if he obtains a favourable wind; if the winds are contrary, he may take as much as two years; consequently, those who embark must carry with them supplies to last for three years. Moreover, the sea has the effect of creating a great yearning for the homeland, and many lose their lives on the voyage.' On hearing this report, Kan Ying went no further.

The 'Great Sea' mentioned in the text was formerly believed to be the Caspian, but Hirth has shown conclusive reasons for identifying it with the Persian Gulf, so that the sea voyage indicated must have been from a port on the Tigris or Euphrates, round the Arabian peninsula, and up the Red Sea to the Gulf of Suez. The Parthians doubtless had good reasons of their own for wishing to prevent direct commercial intercourse between the Romans and the Chinese; but it is tantalising to reflect that a sailor's yarn may have been the deciding factor in keeping two great empires asunder. The opportunity thus lost never occurred again.

There is no record of Chinese traders having made the whole journey to the West by sea; but in A.D. 166, according to the histories, an embassy arrived at the Chinese Court bearing tribute from 'An-tun, King of Ta Ts'in'. It is stated to have come via Annam, which means that it must have used the sea route. This, it is added, was the only occasion during the Han period when there was direct communication between Ta Ts'in and China. 'An-tun' can be no other than the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, but it is highly improbable that the mission was an official one; it is more likely to have been organized for trade purposes by Syrian or Egyptian merchants.

# TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XII

A.D.		A.D.	
212	Caracalla murders Geta; becomes sole emperor. Decree extending Roman citizenship to all free subjects of the Empire.	271	War with Alemanni who break into Italy.
213	Execution of Papinian for refusing to defend the murder of Geta. Caracalla leaves Rome. His whole reign, which is passed in the provinces, is an orgy of bloodshed. Excessive privileges and indiscipline of the army.	272	Aurelian repulses the Alemanni, and surrounds Rome with a new military wall. Suppression of Tetricus, the Gallic 'Augustus.' Capture of Zenobia and fall of Palmyra.
217	Caracalla assassinated in Syria by agents of the prefect Macrinus, who assumes the purple.	273	Persia: Death of Sapor; acc. of Varanes (Bahram) I. Aurelian prepares a Persian expedition.
218	Macrinus defeated and killed by the troops of Bassianus (Elagabalus), the thirteen-year-old priest of the Syrian sun god at Emesa, a great nephew of Severus. Elagabalus emperor.	275	Aurelian assassinated. No emperor for eight months. The Senate then appoints Marcus Claudius Tacitus.
220	India: Break up of the Kushan empire	276	Tacitus dies on Persian campaign. His brother Florian usurps the purple, but is put down by Probus, who is formally accepted as emperor. Persian campaign abandoned.
222	Elagabalus murdered. Alexander Severus emperor. China: End of Han dynasty. Three Kingdoms. to 275.	277-281	Probus conducts a series of successful trans-Rhine campaigns.
223	Ulpian minister till his murder in 218.	279	Suppression of unwilling revolt of Saturninus.
226	Persia: The Sassanid Artaxerxes (Ardashir) overthrows the Arsacid dynasty of Parthia and founds the new Persian Empire.	282	Probus murdered in a mutiny. Carus emperor.
233-4	Artaxerxes challenges the Roman Empire. Doubtful successes of Alexander; services of Chosroes, Arsacid king of Armenia.	283	Persian campaign of Carus. He is killed by lightning in trans-Tigris. Roman retreat. Carinus in West, Numerianus in East, sons of Carus, respectively proclaimed emperor.
235	Alexander murdered while campaigning on the Danube. The mutineers make the Thracian Maximinus emperor.	284	Death of Numerian; military election of Diocletian, who marches against Carinus; on the assassination of Carinus, Diocletian emperor.
237	The Gordians in Africa revolt against the usurper. They are slain, but the Senate proclaims Maximus and Balbinus.	285	Diocletian associates Maximian, as Augustus for the West. The centre of the supreme imperial authority shifts from Italy to the East. In Italy Milan displaces Rome as headquarters.
238	Maximinus killed at Aquileia by mutineers. Maximus and Balbinus killed by the soldiery, who proclaim the boy Gordian.	286	Carausius dominates the Channel.
239	The prefect Misitheus rules in Gordian's name.	287	Carausius recognized as Britannic Augustus.
240	Persia: Sapor I succeeds Artaxerxes.	290	Tiridates recovers the Armenian crown.
243	Sapor invades Syria. Syrian campaign of Gordian and Misitheus. Death of Misitheus.	292	Quadruple partition of the Empire; Diocletian Augustus in the East (capital Nicæa), with Galerius Caesar on the Danube (cap. Sirmium); Maximian Augustus at Milan, with Constantius Chlorus Caesar at Trèves.
244	Gordian assassinated. The prefect Philip 'the Arabian' usurps the purple.	293	Carausius assassinated by usurper Allectus.
248	Celebration of the thousandth year from the traditional foundation of Rome in 753 B.C.	296	Constantius recovers Britain; fall of Allectus.
249	Appearance of Goths on the lower Danube. Revolt of Decius. Philip killed at Verona. Decius emperor. He inaugurates reformation in morals and religion, revives the censorship, and persecutes the Christians.	297	Narses of Persia recovers Armenia. Persian War.
250	Decius campaigns against Goths on the Danube.	298	Defeat and victories of Galerius.
251	Decius killed in great defeat at Forum Trebonii. Peace made with the Goths by the new emperor Gallus (appointed by the Senate).	299	Forty years' peace with Persia. Tiridates restored in Armenia.
253	Aemilianus in Illyria defeats Goths; revolts and kills Gallus, but is crushed by Valerian. Valerian emperor; associating his son Gallienus.	303	Edict for suppression of Christianity, which Constantius declines to enforce. The last of Diocletian persecution.
256-258	Successes of Gallienus and Postumus against Alemanni and Franks on Gallic border.	305	Diocletian abdicates; also Maximian. Galerius and Constantius, Augusti; Maximin (Daza) and Flavius Severus, Caesars.
258	Persia: Sapor subjugates Armenia, expelling the infant Tiridates.	306	Death of Constantius. His son Constantine becomes Caesar, Severus becomes Western Augustus.
259	Goths on Black Sea overrun Asia Minor. Destruction of the temple of Diana at Ephesus.	307	Revolt of Maxentius and Maximian, who are both proclaimed Augusti; death of Severus. They also proclaim Constantine Augustus.
260	Goths capture Cyzicus and raid Aegean coasts. Sapor invades Mesopotamia. Persian War. Defeat and capture of Valerian by Sapor at Edessa. Gallienus sole emperor. Sapor surprises and sacks Antioch, but his attack on Syria is checked by Odenathus of Palmyra.	308	Galerius relinquishes invasion of the West, but makes Licinius Caesar on the Danube and concedes title of Augustus to Maximin. Maximian is deposed but continues intrigues.
261-268	Decree of Gallienus excluding senators from military service. During this period, some score of local commanders assume the purple—they are known as the Thirty Tyrants—but are crushed, except in Gaul. Gallienus, however, recognizes Odenathus at Palmyra as associate Augustus in the East.	310	Persia: Birth and accession of Sapor II Postumus.
265	China: End of the Three Kingdoms; union under the Western Tsin (Chin) dynasty.	311	Fall of Maximian and death of Galerius. Licinius becomes fourth Augustus. Intrigues of Maxentius and Maximin.
266	Assassination of Odenathus; who is succeeded by his widow Zenobia.	312	Constantine invades Italy; tradition of his Vision. Maxentius crushed and killed at battle of the Milvian Bridge.
268	Gallienus killed in quelling a revolt. Claudius II emperor. For two centuries the emperors with few exceptions are of Illyrian stock.	313	Constantine comes to terms with Licinius, who crushes Maximin. Two Augusti only. Constantine issues the Milan Edict of Toleration.
269	Gothic war. Great victory of Claudius at Naissus.	314	Constantine arbitrates at Council of Arles.
270	Claudius dies of plague. Aurelian emperor. Treaty establishing Goths as allies in Dacia.	314-322	Campaigns on and across the Danube; and re-organization of the West.
		317	China: Eastern Tsin dynasty.
		320	India: Rise of Gupta empire under Chandragupta II.
		323	Final duel between Constantine and Licinius as Pagan champion. Licinius crushed. Constantine sole emperor, with no rival.
		324	Edict of Toleration throughout the Empire.
		325	General Council of the Church at Nicæa, under Constantine's presidency; Arianism condemned.
		326	Athanasius Patriarch of Alexandria. Dedication of Constantinople which takes the place of Rome as the centre of the Empire, still called Roman.
		330	India: Accession of Samudragupta.

## Chronicle XII

### THE EMPIRE IN DECLINE:

A.D. 211—330

**T**HE expansion of the Roman Empire had practically ceased with Julius Caesar, save that the annexation of Britain, which he had postponed in order to give his attention to other more immediately important considerations, had been carried out a hundred years after his death by Claudius and the Flavians. Augustus and Tiberius, after experimental campaigns, had realized that Germany—the Trans-Rhine and Trans-Danube—was not to be subjugated. Trajan had yielded to the temptation of conquest, and succeeded in organizing a precarious colonisation of Dacia, but had failed to make good in his adventure across the Tigris. In that region, the Parthian power was indeed in decay, but was on the point of being resuscitated under a Persian dynasty.

To hold the Rhine-Danube-Euphrates frontier imposed a tremendous strain on the military resources of the Empire; beyond that frontier the imperial armies might wage victorious campaigns, but to follow up victories by attempting permanent occupation would have involved an enormous increase in the permanent military establishment for garrisoning the annexed territory. And now the movements among the migratory barbarians were making the problem of maintaining the existing frontier increasingly difficult. After Severus, the Empire is fighting not so much to roll back the barbarian tide as to hold its own against the rising flood.

#### **Oriental Menace to the State**

**D**URING a period covering some three centuries, Europe west of the Adriatic and the Rhine had become so thoroughly Latinised that its peoples have never lost their Latinity, though preserving their several racial characteristics. Greece, on the other hand, had remained essentially Greek, Asia and Africa essentially Oriental though tempered with Hellenism, while the great belt along the south bank of the

Danube from Illyria to the Black Sea had never been either Latinised or Hellenised; and the Latinising of Britain had been superficial. Beyond the border of the Roman Empire in the East, the exotic Hellenism planted by the Macedonians had altogether died out. Across the Euphrates and the Arabian desert, all was unequivocally Oriental. Could Rome prevent her eastern empire from being reabsorbed by its native Orientalism?

Beyond the Rhine-Danube border lay the New Peoples, tribes bred to arms: Germans, Dacians, 'Scythians'; behind them Scandinavians, 'northmen.' Would the Latinised or the Hellenised Empire be able to escape submersion? The Empire had on its side the supreme advantage of a vast organization, under a single central control—if that control were adequate—and of a sense of unity despite its diversity.

#### **Universal Citizenship decreed**

**T**HE diversity was sufficiently marked when an emperor, who was himself an African with a Syrian wife, died at York in Celtic Britain in A.D. 211, having been raised to the purple eighteen years before by the legions and cohorts serving in Illyria and on the Danube, in defiance of the only legions whose recruiting ground was in Italy, the Praetorians. The succession to Septimius Severus was shared at first by the two degenerate sons who were serving with the army in Britain, Bassianus, known always by his nickname Caracalla, and Geta. The theoretical unity at least was formally emphasised by the first public act of Caracalla, the extension of Roman citizenship in A.D. 212 to all freemen in the Empire.

Caracalla at one swoop did away with the surviving distinction between provincials and citizens. Conceivably, however, when citizenship ceased to be a privilege it also lost some of its sentimental value to those who enjoyed it.

## Chronicle XII. A.D. 211-330

Severus had restored the military power and prestige of the Empire, which had suffered grievously under Commodus ; ruling as an autocrat with hardly veiled disregard of constitutional forms, he had more than maintained the authority of the principate. The succession of his sons was undisputed, but neither meant to share the power with his brother for long. The two young men made no pretence of concealing their mutual hostility which their mother, Julia Domna, the long and deservedly trusted consort of Severus, did her best to allay. Yet she could not even save Geta from being murdered in her very arms by Caracalla, who claimed that he had been forced to slay his brother in self-defence.

The assassin's bestial savagery was at once displayed. The prefect Papinian, to whose wisdom Severus had for the most part left the civil administration, refused to provide an official defence of the murder, and paid the penalty for the refusal with his life. A host of Geta's real or suspected partisans were put to death by Caracalla's order. The decree of universal citizenship was issued doubtless as a bid for popularity in the provinces, whither Caracalla, now sole emperor, soon betook himself lest the capital should be too hot to hold him ; leaving a fellow-countryman, Macrinus, in the office formerly held by Papinian.

In the provinces Caracalla continued his career of savagery, shifting from place to place. At Alexandria, having suffered some insult to his dignity, he had some thousands of the population "massacred. These things were endured because he bought the good will of the soldiery by relaxation of discipline and lavish donations and increase of pay, both at the expense of the civil population as well as of military efficiency. The terror was ended in 217, the sixth year of his reign, because the prefect Macrinus discovered that his own life was threatened, and suborned an assassin to do away with the tyrant, who was then in Syria, before the blow should fall. Yet the death of Caracalla only plunged the Empire a fraction deeper into the abyss of degradation.

Macrinus, whose guilt was at first unsuspected, procured his own elevation to the imperial dignity, since there was no obvious rival. But he was no soldier, and lacked both the abilities and the character to maintain the position at which his ambition had snatched. When a rival was produced his fate was sealed. There were no descendants of Severus, but there were surviving his wife's sister Maesa, her two daughters Soaemias and Mamaea, and their two young sons Bassianus and Alexander.



**CARACALLA AND GETA, DEGENERATE SONS OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS**

Caracalla (left), to give Bassianus his historic nickname, and Geta, his younger brother, were with their father, Septimius Severus, in Britain when he died at York in A.D. 211, and they immediately returned to Rome as joint heirs to the purple. Almost immediately Caracalla, then only twenty-three years of age, murdered Geta, actually in the arms of his mother, Julia Domna (right), and so embarked on a six years' reign of terror that was terminated by his own assassination.

*Berlin Museum (left) and The Louvre*





#### PRESENTATION OF CARACALLA TO THE SENATE

With the blood of his brother Geta still wet upon his hands, Caracalla appeared before the Senate to demand and receive their recognition of his assumption of the imperial purple and power. Ratification by the Senate of the appointment of each new emperor was a matter of constitutional procedure, but it became purely formal and was not even invited when Carus was proclaimed. The outstanding event of Caracalla's reign was his extension of Roman citizenship to all freemen in the Empire.

*Palazzo Sacchetti; courtesy of Dr. Thomas Ashby*

These Syrian women were ambitious. The elder of the boys had been made high-priest of the Syrian sun god Elagabalus at Emesa. To win over the soldiery, his mother and grandmother did not scruple to spread the story that Caracalla was his father. The actual responsibility of Macrinus for the death of Caracalla was becoming known, and the soldiery were full of suspicions that he intended to curtail the privileges and the licence they had enjoyed under Caracalla. The bulk of the troops in Syria were incited to rise in the name of Caracalla's son; Macrinus was overthrown in a battle some miles from Antioch, and the young high priest of Elagabalus became Augustus Caesar (218), the Senate in Rome assenting as a matter of course. History knows him by the name of his sun god, often twisted into the form of Heliogabalus. He dated his reign, actually of nearly four years, from the death of Caracalla (217-222).

The reign was one vast orgy of the most extravagant and monstrous luxury and

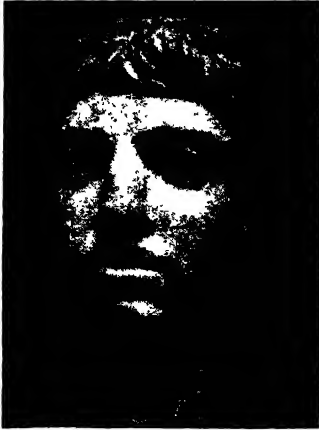
unspeakable vices; the only redeeming feature in it was the comparative absence of sheer blood-lust. In Rome the obscene rites of Oriental deities superseded those of the western pantheon. After making every allowance for the exaggerations of shocked moralists and the inventive capacity of gloating prurience, what remains leaves the figure of Elagabalus the most contemptibly nauseating in the history of civilization. The one mitigating circumstance is the emperor's youth; for when at last the exasperated Praetorians slew him and flung his dead body into the Tiber, he cannot have been more than one-and-twenty.

Such a career as his was doomed from the first to be brief. Maesa, no doubt, very soon realized that if her hopes were to be fulfilled it must be through her second grandson, whose upbringing was very different; for Alexander's mother, Mamaea, was a shrewd and able as well as an ambitious woman. The younger boy was of an amiable nature, intelligent



and free from the inordinate sensuality of the elder ; and virtuous influences were brought to bear on his training. He was, so to speak, everything that Elagabalus was not, though it may be doubted whether he had real strength of character.

welcomed a prince who was, at any rate, mild and virtuous. If he was young and inexperienced, there were plenty of men who had been trained to administration under Septimius Severus and Papinian to aid him in the task of government.



### SYRIAN PRINCES, BAD AND GOOD, WHO WORE THE IMPERIAL PURPLE

Almost unimaginable moral degeneracy stigmatised Varius Avitus Bassianus, who became emperor in A.D. 218 under the name of Elagabalus. Very different both in character and by training was his first cousin, Alexander Severus (centre), son of Julia Mamaea (right), whom he adopted in 211, and by whom he was succeeded in the following year. These young men were grandsons of Julia Maesa, who had used her influence as sister of Julia Domna to secure their ultimate succession.

*Capitoline Museum, Rome ; Archaeological Museum, Florence ; and the Vatican*

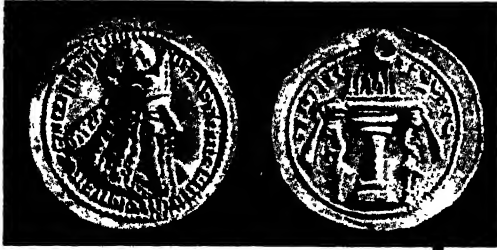
Pains were taken to make him personally popular with the soldiery, who were sickened at the unmanliness of the emperor ; and it was finally their disgusted conviction that Elagabalus, in panic jealousy of his cousin, was determined to do away with him, that drove the Praetorians to invade the palace, slay Elagabalus, and proclaim Alexander Severus (A.D. 222-235) emperor, while yet in his seventeenth year.

Another nightmare had passed. The chroniclers are unanimous in their praises of the virtues displayed by the young emperor, the restoration of tranquillity, the revival of the prosperity which had suffered grievously from the merciless and capricious taxation imposed to meet the extravagances of the two last reigns. Probably the moving spirit of the government for some years was Mamaea, who exercised a supreme influence over the son she had judiciously trained and guided. The empire had suffered from a surfeit of the fruits of degeneracy, and

Alexander, in his all too brief reign, would seem to have taken Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius as his models. In the civil administration he was guided by a carefully selected council of state, in which during his first years the leading minister was Ulpian, a pupil of Papinian ; holding, like his master in the days of Severus, the curious composite office of praetorian prefect, which had in effect become a judicial rather than a military appointment. But the problem of effective control was rendered for him more difficult than it had ever been for the Antonines, through the failure of military discipline and the insubordination of the rank and file of the soldiery for which Caracalla was mainly responsible.

Alexander owed his throne, probably his life, to the Praetorians, and neither he nor they could forget it. Attempts on the part of their own protégé to curtail military licence were the more angrily resented by them, though at first they were content to attribute them to their own prefect

## The Empire in Decline



### FOUNDER OF A PERSIAN DYNASTY

In 226 Ardashir, grandson of a Persian chief named Sassan, established himself upon the throne of Persia and assumed the ancient title 'King of Kings.' The Sassanid dynasty thus founded by him endured until 637.

*From Sarre, 'Die Kunst des Alten Persiens'*

Ulpius, whom, rising in mutiny, they slew in the very presence of the emperor, who strove in vain to shield him from their fury.

Alexander in person led Roman armies on at least one great campaign against the Eastern power which now again bore the Persian instead of the Parthian name. Trajan at the beginning, and Cassius Avidius in the second half, of the second century A.D. had struck heavy blows at the long formidable Arsacid power; Severus also had conducted a vigorous campaign against the Parthians. But now the Arsacids had been swept away by a Persian chief, the founder of the Sassanid dynasty, who assumed the old Persian name Ardashir (Artaxerxes) and was bent on nothing less than the recovery of the old empire of the Great King. He deliberately challenged Rome and bade her depart out of Asia; and Alexander took up the challenge.

The emperor returned from the campaign to render to the Senate a grandiloquent report of great victories won against immense odds. It seems clear however that the honours on the whole rested with the Persian who, though he suffered heavy defeats at the hands of the Romans and their dependent ally, Chosroes of Armenia, did not in fact lose any territory; while it would appear that the personal prestige of Ardashir was

enhanced. Alexander, hitherto untried, had no military reputation to lose, but achieved none with the soldiery; and since they were already more than sufficiently disposed to mutiny and insubordination, the failure was fatal to the emperor.

Alexander had scarcely returned to Rome when he was summoned to the northern frontier where the pressure from the German and other barbarian hordes was never-ceasing. There he met his fate. The story is obscure. The soldiery mutinied, murdered Alexander in his tent, and proclaimed emperor the willing captain of their own choice.

The new master of the world, the elect of the fighting frontiersmen who now formed the bulk of the Roman armies, was the Thracian Maximinus (235-238), a giant whose vast strength and almost incredible powers of endurance had attracted the attention of Severus thirty years before. Such a man easily becomes a hero in the eyes of men whose highest ideal is found in sheer physical prowess. Moreover, this barbarian of mighty thews had sufficient intelligence to win and to justify his promotion, not indeed to the highest military command but to positions of responsibility. The soldiers believed



### EMPERORS DURING THE ARMY'S PLEASURE

Brute strength was the dominant characteristic of the Thracian Maximinus, whose three years' reign was a nightmare of oppression and cruelty. It ended with his murder in 238—in which year four other emperors met a violent death—and then under Gordian III (right) the Empire had comparative quiet.

*Capitoline and National Museums, Rome; photos, Alinari and Anderson*



PHILIP THE ARABIAN

Marcus Julius Philippus I—his bust is a splendid portrait—was yet another who waded to the throne through blood and perished by the sword. During his reign (244-49) the millenary of the foundation of Rome was celebrated.

*Vatican; photo, Anderson*

that they had found to lead them a soldier of their own kind, of the only kind to whose discipline they were ready to submit.

Maximinus was more than willing, but his crude intelligence was not commensurate with his highly developed muscles. For the moment, however, the sheer brute force of the man was irresistible; the more because the murder of a prince generally esteemed (as Alexander had been) was wholly unexpected. For three years, remaining himself with the army on the Rhine or the Danube, Maximinus ruled the Empire; which meant mainly that he avenged himself on every one whose ambition, character or abilities he feared, or by whom he conceived himself to have been slighted in the past; while all over the Empire he robbed the cities of their public funds and stripped temples of their treasures, stamping out resistance by ruthless massacre.

The general wrath and terror came to a head in the province of Africa. The people slaughtered an imperial official charged with the business of executing an imperial robbery, and forced Gordian,

their own octogenarian prefect, in whose veins ran the blood of the Scipios, to assume the purple, very much against his own will, associating with him his scarcely less reluctant son (A.D. 237).

The Gordians made haste to report these proceedings to the Senate, submitting themselves to its decision as the constitutional authority. The Senate responded by confirming their election and declaring Maximinus a public enemy. But meanwhile the commander in Mauretania fell upon the Gordians and slew them. On receiving this alarming news the senators, who could hope for no mercy from Maximinus, elected two of their own number jointly, Balbinus and Maximus, to the principate (238); though forced by the city mob to associate with them as Caesar a very youthful Gordian. Maximinus, however, had to be reckoned with; for after some delay he was now moving down from the northern frontier upon Italy, and the armies which could there be mustered had little prospect of being able to meet him successfully in the field.

Maximinus, passing the Alps, found before him a denuded country, and a strongly defended fortress in Aquileia. He sat down before it and his troops began to starve; starving, they became mutinous, and murdered their chief in his tent. They had, of course, no alternative but to profess loyalty to the constitutional authority. The senatorial revolution was apparently complete. The joint emperors set about an honest attempt to place the government on an orderly basis and restore the discipline of the army, which very soon mutinied again, cut them in pieces, and declared the thirteen-year-old Gordian sole emperor. Five emperors—the two elder Gordians, Maximinus, Maximus and Balbinus—had all been slain within a period of twelve months (237-8).

#### Millenary of Rome's Foundation

**T**HEN there was a respite, since there was no reformer bold enough to exasperate the soldiers again. The civil administration fell at first into the hands of a group of venal intriguers, and then into the worthier control of the young emperor's tutor Misitheus, who, during his brief

## The Empire in Decline

rule, accompanied and directed Gordian on a successful campaign across the Euphrates. But Misitheus died, and his place as praetorian prefect was taken by a soldier, Philip the Arabian; who lost no time in supplanting and slaying Gordian, having first won the favour of the soldiery, who hailed him emperor on the banks of the Euphrates (A.D. 244). •

Tradition affirms that Philip was by birth an Arabian and had been by profession a brigand before entering the military service, his rise in which marks him as a man of some capacity. Also tradition claims him as a Christian. The most notable event in his five years' tenure of power was the magnificent celebration in 248 of the thousandth anniversary (according to the accepted popular chronology) of the foundation of the City of Rome in the legendary days of Romulus. A few months later news came to Rome that the legions on the lower Danube were in revolt and had proclaimed one Marinus emperor.

### Decius' Worthy Use of Power

THE next report was that the soldiers had turned on their own nominee and murdered him; but the position was sufficiently serious to demand the sending of an able commander, Decius—no Asiatic nor barbarian from the north, but of a famous old Roman family—to control the troops in that barbarian region. They, however, were not to be controlled; and offered their new chief the choice between empire and present death. He chose empire, and marched with his troops upon Italy; Philip met him with numerically superior forces near the border; but the victory lay decisively with the war-hardened veterans of Moesia. Philip was slain either in or after the battle. The Senate made haste to ratify the election of Decius (249), who professed, perhaps with truth, to have accepted the decision of his soldiers against his will.

He would seem to have been a man of ability and character who was genuinely resolved to make a worthy use of the power which had been thrust on him. He proposed to restore the state by a revival of the old Roman virtues; the first steps

to that end being the appointment of an honoured and distinguished senator, Valerian, to the long obsolete office of censor, and a zealous return to the pristine worship of the ancient gods of Rome; which brought about a sharp but short persecution of the Christians, who had been undisturbed since the days of Marcus Aurelius. But action of another kind was immediately necessary. The menace on the middle and lower Danube was greater than it had ever been before.

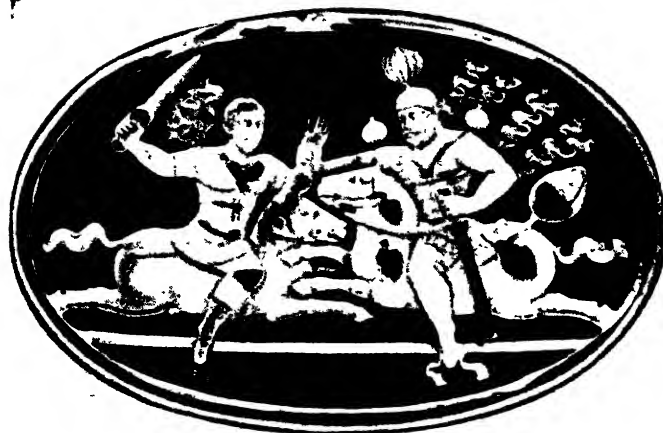
We have been familiar with Germans under various tribal names on the Rhine and the upper Danube, since the first appearance of the Cimbri and Teutones in the time of Marius, down to the Quadi and Marcomanni who vexed the emperor Marcus. The southern group was now coming to be known collectively as the Alemanni; those of the north were later to acquire the general title of Franks. The tribes in Dacia and on the lower Danube who challenged Trajan were of a different



**DECIVS, ROMAN EMPEROR**

Integrity of purpose as well as ability and a high courage distinguished Decius, who reluctantly accepted the purple after his defeat of his predecessor, Philip, at Verona in 249. He fell in battle against the Goths in 251.

*Capitoline Museum*



#### VAINGLORIOUS VERSION OF A VICTORY

Persian pride in the triumphs over Roman arms found expression in many reliefs on rocks and gems. This sardonyx seal depicts the Persian king Sapor I (distinguished by the grooved globes attached to his helm and shoulders) personally pulling the Roman emperor Valerian from his horse—an imaginary incident, since Valerian was trapped by treachery.

*Bibliothèque Nationale Paris; photo Giraudon*

stock, Sarmatians and others, to whom Romans and Greeks applied the very indefinite name of Scythian.

But a new movement was now working among the more northern peoples who occupied both shores of the southern Baltic. The first of these to make themselves felt were the Goths, who now emerge in the place of the Sarmatians on the Danube. In 250 Decius was summoned to the Balkans by the news that a vast Gothic host, supplemented by the fighting men of various non-Gothic tribes, had swarmed over the Danube and was ravaging the Roman province of Moesia.

He found them engaged in besieging the fortress of Nicopolis. On his approach they left it to attack the much more important stronghold of Philippopolis, farther south. Decius marched in pursuit; the Goths turned, surprised his army, put it to rout, and rolled on to Philippopolis, which fell after a stubborn resistance—since the Roman forces, demoralised by defeat, could not be hurried to its relief—yielding a great booty and many prisoners of high station. Decius, however, reorganized his army, blocked the passes, cut the Goths' communications with the Trans-Danube, and threatened them with destruction. He was bent on dealing

them nothing short of an annihilating blow and when at last he had brought them to bay he very nearly succeeded. Both sides knew that the stake was all or nothing. In the great battle of Forum Trebonii, the emperor's gallant son was slain before his eyes, but the first line of Goths was shattered, and the second. But the front of the third was covered by a bog in which the imperial legions, pushing on to complete the victory, became hopelessly entangled, so that they were cut to pieces in the endeavour to extricate themselves, the emperor perishing with the rest (A.D. 251).

The disaster was terrific, but not without precedent; its sequel, however, was even

more ominous. Decius had realized that the Goths were foes who for the safety of the Empire must be broken utterly and at all costs. Gallus, the successor chosen by the Senate—for the legions made no move—was of another mould. The defeat was of a character which by no means proved that the Goths were invincible by the Roman arms, but Gallus would take no more such risks. In return for retirement with all their booty and their prisoners, and a pledge not again to invade the Roman territory, he offered them a heavy annual subsidy. They accepted the terms with alacrity, and as a matter of course broke them as soon as it suited them to do so.

Within a few months, the Goths or their allies were pouring into Illyria. Aemilianus, commanding Pannonia, flung himself upon them and routed them. Having redeemed the honour of the Roman name, he, with the enthusiastic support of his legions, claimed the majesty so unworthily enjoyed by Gallus. He invaded Italy; the troops of Gallus, who marched against him, deserted to the rebel; Gallus was slain at Spoletium (A.D. 253). The Senate had barely time to ratify the title of the victor before he was in turn overthrown, four months after his victory.

## The Empire in Decline

Valerian, nominated three years before to the honourable office of censor by Decius, had been sent to command the armies on the Rhine. Gallus had been a constitutionally appointed emperor; Aemilianus was a usurper. Valerian marched against him; the fickle soldiery turned against Aemilianus and murdered him; and Valerian began a seven years' reign (A.D. 253-260) which brought fresh disaster. With himself he associated his son Gallienus, who reigned for eight years longer.

Valerian was already not less than sixty when public acclamation set him on the throne of the Caesars. Despite his virtues,



**SAPOR, 'KING OF KINGS'**

Sapor I succeeded his father Ardashir (Artaxerxes) on the Sassanian throne in 241 and carried on the conflict with Rome. He died in 272.

*Berlin Museum*

the event did not justify the selection. The guardianship of the German frontiers was placed in the hands of his son and colleague, together with the able soldier Postumus, who achieved what were claimed as glorious victories over the Franks and the Alemanni; but the actual fact appears to be that the north-Germans flooded across the lower Rhine into and through Gaul, even penetrating the Pyrenees; while the Alemanni were not so much

curbed by the Roman arms as conciliated by Gallienus' marriage to the daughter of their most powerful prince, upon whom estates were bestowed in Pannonia.



**ABJECT SUBMISSION OF ROMAN EMPEROR TO PERSIAN KING**

Under the tombs of the Achaemenids at Naksh-i-Rustam, near Persepolis, are a number of rock carvings. Very notable is this representation of the proudest moment in the career of Sapor I, when, mounted on horseback and wearing the royal crown and armour, he received the surrender of the Roman emperor, Valerian, who knelt before him suing for grace. This event occurred in 260, and thenceforward until his death the captive emperor suffered every humiliation at his conqueror's hands.

*From Friedrich Sarre, 'Die Kunst des Alten Persien.'*



While Gallienus was engaged in the West, his father Valerian was plunging into disaster in the Farther East. The great Ardashir was dead; he had held his own and a little more against Alexander, but at too great cost to be able himself to prosecute the ambitions he bequeathed to his son Sapor, or Shapur. Sapor's aggression was the cause of the campaign on which the young emperor Gordian was engaged when Philip usurped the purple in 244. Sapor, though checked for the moment, soon gathered strength.

Chosroes of Armenia, himself one of the old Arsacid stock which Ardashir had ousted from the Parthian monarchy, had always successfully defied the Persian, and had in fact achieved the most notable victories against him in the war of Alexander Severus, as the ally of Rome. Sapor turned his arms against Armenia, having first taken the precaution of procuring the assassination of Chosroes, whose young heir, Tiridates, was unable to make head against the invader. Armenia fell an easy prey to Sapor, who captured the Roman fortresses of Carrhae—the scene of the Parthian triumph over Crassus three hundred years before—and Nisibis.

There was more than enough military employment already for the younger of the two emperors, on the German front. Valerian, old though he was, assumed the command in the East. Near Edessa his army, by the treachery of the praetorian prefect Macrianus, was led into a trap. The legions failed in a desperate attempt to cut their way out; Valerian entering Sapor's camp to hold a conference with him was treacherously seized, and the Roman force surrendered (A.D. 260).

The tale of the insults and degradations to which his imperial captive was subjected—

Sapor is said to have set his foot off the kneeling Valerian's neck whenever he mounted his horse—is doubtless more or less mythical, but certainly the old man did not long survive. The conqueror swept devastatingly over Syria, gathering spoils and captives, but without thought of setting up an organized dominion; only from Palmyra, on the border of the Syrian desert, came horsemen under their gallant leader Odenathus, who evaded battle, cut Sapor's communications and harassed his retreat over the Euphrates.

Gallienus, the unworthy son of an estimable though far from great father, was now sole emperor, save for the fact that an unfailing crop of claimants to the title was raised up in the provinces, at intervals of a few months, throughout his reign; though only nineteen of them can be counted, and most of them were tyrants only in the sense that they snatched at power by rebellion, tradition has labelled them the Thirty Tyrants. Enumeration would be superfluous. Gallienus was a tyrant rather of the Neronic type, since he regarded himself as an intellectual.

The 'Thirty' were for the most part forced into rebellion by the soldiery and removed by assassination. Only on Odenathus at Palmyra was the title of Augustus, with practically independent powers, bestowed by a grateful Senate and by Gallienus himself—a title which on his death Odenathus passed on to his admirable and famous wife Zenobia. The whole wretched picture of the period is made the more ghastly by the fact that throughout it famine and plague raged from end to end of the anarchical Empire.

The end came when a general, Aureolus, invaded Italy at the head of the legions from the Rhine. Gallienus, who, like King John, was



**AN IGNOBLE EMPEROR**

Gallienus succeeded his father Valerian (taken captive by the Persians) in 260 and reigned until 268, when he was murdered by his troops. His profligate reign was one record of disaster.

*Museo delle Terme; photo, Alinari*

## The Empire in Decline

capable of occasional outbursts of startling energy, roused himself from the round of vicious indulgence to march against him, and shut him up in desperate plight in Milan. But the cup was full; a conspiracy was formed; Gallienus was enticed from his cups and slain. With his last words he nominated as his successor the very man whom the conspirators themselves had selected, the low-born but able Illyrian soldier Claudius (268).

The choice, ratified by the Senate and accepted by the legions, was justified by the event. Claudius would make no terms with the rebel in Milan save his unconditional surrender, nor did he interfere when the Senate condemned Aureolus to death; but he soon gained a reputation for clemency by issuing a general indemnity. His business was to save the Empire from the Goths, who had assembled a vast force computed at 320,000 men, carried on a vast fleet in the Black Sea, and were pouring into Macedon and Thrace. The great campaign against them involved heavy fighting and fierce battles; very definitely it was the supreme skill of the emperor's dispositions that finally won the decisive victory of Naissus and earned for him the title of Gothicus. In the next year (A.D. 270) the victor died of the prevailing pestilence, but he had named as his successor the best of his officers, a man probably of his own race, and of peasant birth like himself, Aurelian.

### Aurelian crushes the Alemanni

**T**HE defeat of the Goths was only a first step in the saving of the Empire, and even their defeat by Claudius was not final. His death gave them fresh hopes, and it needed a fresh conflict with Aurelian to bring about a conclusive treaty to which both parties loyally adhered. The Goths engaged to supply the Roman armies with a contingent, and withdrew over the Danube; but they were allowed to settle in Dacia, while the Dacian colonists were either transplanted to new lands in Moesia



AURELIAN, 'RESTORER OF THE WORLD'

Lucius Domitius Aurelianus was born about 213 of Pannonian peasant stock and became one of the chief officers of Claudius, whom he succeeded in 270. An autocratic but statesmanlike ruler and a brilliant soldier, he crushed all the enemies of Rome and restored the integrity of the Empire before his assassination.

*British Museum*

or remained under Gothic dominion if they so elected; which many of them did.

With the Goths Aurelian had effected a genuine pacification, but even while he was doing so the Alemanni were on the move again in great raiding contingents, pouring through the Raetian Alps into the plain of the Po. By a swift march up the Danube Aurelian caught the raiders as they were returning, and crushed their van on the north of the river while the rear was still on the south bank. The second body was enveloped; but, threatened with annihilation and unable to advance, it burst through to the south again. The Germans had the advantage in mobility, and it was only after a severe campaign and at least one defeat on Italian soil that Aurelian finally crushed them on the banks of the Metaurus; where nearly five centuries before Claudius Nero had fought and won the decisive battle of the Hannibalian war. Never in all those centuries had a foreign foe thrust so near to the heart of Italy; and there is a real significance in the fact that Aurelian was moved to raise a new wall of defence encircling Rome.

The overthrow of the Alemanni, following the Gothic pacification, seemed to promise a long period of security on the Rhine-Danube frontier. There remained beyond the borders of the Empire the insolent Persian, still unpunished for the devastation he had wrought and the humiliation he had inflicted. But before that matter could be taken in hand there





AURELIAN'S WALL, NEAR THE PORTA S. PAOLO

Aurelian began his new walls to defend Rome in 271 and they were completed under Probus in 280. They were more than twelve miles in circuit, were 60 feet high externally, were built of brick-faced concrete and had massive towers at intervals of about fifteen yards. Much of the wall still exists.

*Photo, Anderson*

was still the task of reconsolidating the Empire itself, which had fallen asunder in the days of Gallienus.

One general, Postumus, had set up a practically independent dominion in Gaul; his fourth successor, Tetricus, was now ruling in the West. In the East Zenobia, following Odenathus, not only claimed for herself the imperial title which had been legitimately bestowed on him, but was in fact recognized throughout the East and in Egypt, which owed to Palmyra their preservation from the Persians. The abilities first of Odenathus and then of Zenobia, aided by the wisdom of the philosopher Longinus, had given protection and restored no small degree of order and prosperity, without aid from the emperors recognized in the West, to whose pretensions Zenobia was by no means willing to yield. When, however, such a captain as Aurelian asserted himself, Zenobia, with all her very unusual abilities, her courage, her virtues and her beauty, could stand no chance against him. But Tetricus and Gaul took precedence.

In truth this self-styled emperor in Gaul and the West was only anxious to be relieved from a situation where he was anything but master. It would have cost him his life at the hands of the soldiery to make

submission to Aurelian; but while making a show of defiance he was engaged in betraying the troops who were driving him on, with the result that Aurelian won a crushing victory near Châlons, and established his authority.

Then it was the turn of Zenobia. Dispatching his lieutenant Probus (afterwards emperor) to Egypt, which acknowledged Zenobia's sovereignty, Aurelian led the imperial troops against Palmyra. Zenobia and Zenobia's army offered a valiant but vain resistance. Palmyra itself was besieged. At last Zenobia's defiant courage broke down and she was overtaken and captured in an attempted flight. Along with Tetricus

the captive queen was displayed in the magnificent triumph which celebrated the victories of Aurelian and the restoration of the Empire in its completeness from the Euphrates to the Atlantic. The pride of Rome and of Aurelian being satisfied, the emperor displayed his magnanimity by receiving both the fallen monarchs into favour and endowing them liberally.

It remained to deal with Persia; and ere long a great expedition organized to that end was well on its way when the emperor fell a victim to a vile conspiracy. He was struck down (in A.D. 275) still in the fifth year of a reign which had been a succession of triumphs, not in a rebellion, but because a few guilty persons feared detection and exemplary punishment.

#### Probus' too brief Imperial Career

So well had Claudius and Aurelian restored discipline that the legions loyally awaited the Senate's dilatory choice of a new emperor. In character and capacity Tacitus, the successor eventually chosen, was no unworthy selection; but he was an old man, and he died on a campaign in Asia for which he was physically unfitted when he had reigned six months. Notwithstanding the pretensions of Florianus, Tacitus' brother,

## The Empire in Decline

the claim of Probus—another Illyrian—to the Empire was formally submitted to, and confirmed by, the Senate (A.D. 276).

Sapor was dead and the Persian expedition was abandoned. If the Goths were quieted, the Germans and the Vandals and other Scandinavian peoples were growing increasingly active on the Rhine and the Raetian border, to say nothing of miscellaneous 'Scythians.' Probus, a most distinguished soldier, spent the six years of his reign in vigorous and successful campaigns, carried far across the Rhine, enlisting from the barbarians themselves large bodies of auxiliary troops in the service of Rome. But no series of successes could disguise the fundamental dangers of the situation. While Caesar Augustus was constantly engaged personally on campaigns on one frontier, he could not give his personal attention to the other regions of the great Empire, where the most apparently trusty of lieutenants might prove a broken reed.

So it was now with Saturninus in the East. His legions forced him into a revolt, in which he neither expected nor desired to be successful. It collapsed before the advance of the imperial forces, as did one or two others still more futile. The trouble was that such performances were possible even when the emperor was a soldier so brilliant and a statesman so clement as Probus. Still more ominous was it that one so universally applauded by soldiers and civilians alike was slain in a sudden hare-brained mutiny which had no better excuse than a rumour that the army was to be reduced (A.D. 281). With returning sanity the mutineers gave their allegiance to the praetorian prefect Carus.

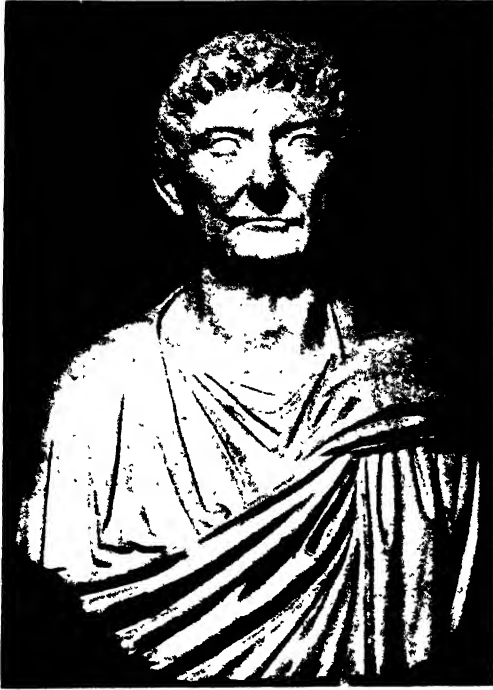
Probus had emphasised his loyalty to the constitution by his deference to the Senate. He had not, in form at least, usurped the principate; like Valerian and Claudius, he had taken the field as a champion of the constitution against a usurper, and, when acclaimed emperor by his troops, had submitted his title, for free acceptance or rejection, to the sovereign choice of the Senate at Rome; as emperor he had treated the senatorial authority with even exaggerated respect. But with his death, all this was at an end. The Praetorians proclaimed Carus; even the formal acquiescence of the Senate was hardly invited; its authority, always dependent on the



### A ROMANCE OF HISTORY AND ITS HEROINE

The Syrian city of Palmyra reached its apogee under Odenathus. After his death, however, his widow, Zenobia (above), claiming independent sovereignty, was defeated and captured by Aurelian, and Palmyra fell. Splendid ruins, including this triple-gated triumphal arch, testify to its former greatness.

*Coin from Bernoulli; photo, F. M. Good*



#### REORGANIZER OF THE EMPIRE

Diocletian (b. 245) was proclaimed emperor by the troops in 284. A brilliant soldier and an able administrator, he virtually refounded the Roman Empire before his abdication in 305. He died in retirement at Salona in 313.

*Capitoline Museum; photo, Anderson*

imperial recognition, flickered out and was never again revived.

Carus, though advanced in years, was an able and experienced soldier. Leaving his elder son Carinus in the West with the title of Caesar, he himself again took up the project of the Persian war. On the way eastward, marching through Illyricum, he inflicted a heavy defeat on a horde of Sarmatians, continued during the winter his advance through Thrace and Asia Minor, and in 283 conducted a triumphant campaign in Mesopotamia and even beyond the Tigris. There, being seized with sickness, his tent was struck by lightning during a terrific thunder-storm; but whether it was the lightning or the illness or merely mortal agency that slew him, Carus perished in that storm. Though he would seem to have been not undeservedly popular, superstition elected to attribute his fate to the wrath of the gods of Persia; and the troops compelled his second son

Numerian (on whom, as on Carinus, the title of Caesar had been bestowed) to abandon the expedition, on which he had accompanied his father.

The title of the two young Caesars to the succession as joint emperors was not disputed, though Carus was said to have intended to adopt a worthier heir in the person of Constantius, great-nephew of Claudius and governor of Dalmatia; for Carinus had begun to display traits of character intolerable to his father. Now he gave his vicious propensities free rein and indulged in extravagances paralleled only by the worst of his predecessors.

Numerian in the East was credited with both character and ability; but his health had broken down under the hardships of the Persian campaign. Though he accompanied his army in its withdrawal westward, he was constantly confined to a sick-bed, where he was rarely seen by anyone save Arrius Aper, the praetorian prefect, through whom passed all business, and indeed all communication with the outside world. At length the general suspicions became uncontrollable; soldiers forced their way into his pavilion, and found not a sick man but a corpse.

That Aper, whose daughter Numerian had married, was intriguing for the succession to the dying emperor there was no manner of doubt; whether he had deliberately compassed his son-in-law's death is another question on which the enraged soldiery, whose affections the dead prince had won, entertained no doubt. In a formal and orderly assembly of the army, the self-constituted council of the officers announced that they had chosen the captain of the bodyguard, Diocletian, to succeed and avenge Numerian. Aper was forthwith brought in chains before the new emperor who, there and then, calling the gods to witness the act of justice, slew him with his own hand.

A few months later the tyrant Carinus was slain, by the dagger of a man whose wife he had seduced. Yet another Illyrian, of birth still humbler than were Claudius or Aurelian or Probus—for the parents of Diocletian were slaves—was on the throne of the Caesars (A.D. 285). The first three in their brief reigns had served the Roman

## The Empire in Decline

Empire well. The fourth, who reigned for twenty-one years, might be called its second founder.

Diocletian reconstructed the imperial system. In some respects his reconstruction was adapted for meeting an existing emergency, but not for permanence, and so far it broke down when he himself resigned the helm; but, in other respects, he was the founder of the system which enabled the Byzantine Empire to survive his death for more than eleven centuries.

Claudius, Aurelian, Probus, in the course of the last sixteen years (A.D. 268-283) had fully vindicated the majesty and might of Rome after more than half a century of repeated disasters and degradations. By their personal qualities, as soldiers mainly, they had broken the onslaughts of the barbarians on every frontier, had saved the Empire from impending disruption, and had restored discipline in the armies. What they did could only have been done by men who were primarily great soldiers with a military outlook. But they certainly had not the opportunity, and perhaps none of them had the outlook needed, to set about the political reorganization required to secure the Empire from dissolution; this was the achievement of Diocletian, who was fortunate in having twenty years during which to effect it.

### Diocletian refounds the Empire

**T**HIS Illyrian 'ranker,' who had been chosen deliberately by the officers of the army in the East in solemn conclave assembled, not because he was their acting chief, but on his merits, must have been a man of the most impressive and individual personality. He had risen from the humblest position with no advantages of education, simply by character and ability, and he continued to exercise a complete mastery over men by no means inclined to recognize a master. He was entirely unfettered by precedents and conventions, though he made no war upon them as such. He opened his career as emperor by publicly slaying a criminal with his own hand; he ended it, as no man before him save Sulla had done, simply because he was tired of it. He shed the ingrained

tradition of a thousand years, and practically ignored the city of Rome, a thing that no man not of a remarkable original genius would have dreamed of doing, because his genius taught him that the centre of gravity was not in Italy, but in the East. And, from beginning to end, after the fall of Carinus, his authority was undisputed, even when he seemed to be voluntarily sharing it with others.

The most conspicuous of his acts, that which most appeals to the imagination and is most generally remembered in connexion with his name, was precisely this sharing of the imperial authority, first with one colleague who bore like himself the supreme title of Augustus, and then six years later with two more subordinate colleagues with the title of Caesar, commonly bestowed on a designated heir.

### Partition of the Empire

**I**N 286 he had already made up his mind that the East and the West must be under separate military command and have separate Emperors, without splitting East and West into two rival dominions. The dominion was to remain one, but under two emperors, the second of whom would never think of himself as a rival of the first, as would be only too likely if he were officially a satrap or viceroy; he must therefore be a colleague. The man for the place was Maximianus, a mighty warrior but Diocletian's devoted admirer, and, almost inevitably, an Illyrian or Pannonian, who would certainly defer to his colleague's judgement on any doubtful question. The partition into East and West was a personal arrangement, and if one of the emperors died there could be no question of a disputed succession. Meanwhile, Maximian should have charge of the West, the senior emperor that of the East, with a general supervision of the whole.

The scheme worked well; for the fancy names the two chose to assume, Jovius and Hercules, were expressive; Hercules was the heroic instrument of Jove the omnipotent. The harmony was complete. It worked so well that in 292 the principle was extended. Each of the emperors took a subordinate colleague; the Augustus would in each case be ultimately

succeeded by his Caesar, who, meanwhile, was Emperor in half of his half of the Empire. For the western Caesar was chosen that Constantius whom Carus was said to have determined to appoint his own successor; for the eastern, Diocletian's able but brutal son-in-law Galerius. Maximian had Italy and Africa, Constantius had Gaul, Britain and probably Spain, Galerius the Balkans, and Diocletian Asia with Egypt. The arrangement remained in force, and continued to work well, till A.D. 305, when Diocletian himself chose to abdicate and to compel the reluctant Maximian to do the same. Then began the rivalries inevitable sooner or later under such a system.

This experiment collapsed when it had served its turn; as it was bound to do. But other features of Diocletian's system were enduring. He made Asia the pivotal centre of the Empire instead of Italy (where Maximian made Milan instead of Rome his capital), preparing the way for Constantine to plant its headquarters at Byzantium. He obliterated the fiction that the Empire was a modification of the old Republic, or indeed was anything other than an unqualified despotism. He gave the imperial court an Oriental character foreign to all tradition. The functions of the Senate, even as a deliberative body concerned with the affairs of the commonwealth, disappeared.

### Reforms in the Administrative System

**T**HE most complete change, however, was in the development of the administrative system, severing the military and the civil functions. The first Claudius had indeed laid the foundations of a bureaucratic system which had done much towards preserving the routine of government; but it was insignificant in comparison with the network of officialdom which grew up under the new order, when civil and military functions ceased to be discharged by the same officers. The continuous uninterrupted working of the civil machinery which resulted was one of the most material forces in preserving the Empire from dissolution.

If Diocletian's partition of the Empire was in the nature of things not destined to

last, it served its immediate purpose of carrying on the work of the Illyrian emperors. (We may remark, incidentally, that all Diocletian's colleagues were also of Illyrian stock.) That had been the defence of the frontier and the unification of the Empire, which was in danger of breaking up into Roman, Gallic and Syrian states. The western Augustus had hardly entered on office and signalled his authority by crushing a widespread insurrection of the downtrodden peasantry in Gaul, when Britain declared its independence; and for seven years the two Augusti found themselves compelled to recognize a third in the person of the Batavian or Belgian adventurer Carausius.

### Carausius' adventure in Britain

**I**T was a curious episode, not without significance. For some years the north Germans had been developing piratical fleets in the harbours and estuaries of the North Sea, whence they raided the Roman provinces of Gaul and Britain. Those fleets were successfully checked only when Maximian placed in command of a defence squadron Carausius, a daring sailor, probably of the Belgae. He held up the pirates, but was charged with appropriating the recovered booty to his own ends; whereupon, instead of meeting the charge, he crossed the Channel and was hailed with acclamation when he proclaimed himself emperor of Britain. Holding the seas he could defy invasion and threaten to raise insurrection in Gaul. For the time it was worth while for the Roman emperors to accept the accomplished fact and come to an agreement with him, acknowledging him as a partner; for Africa and Egypt demanded their active attention.

Carausius ruled with vigour and success. But by 292 Maximian had overcome the tribesmen of Mauretania and Diocletian had restored order in Egypt. They appointed the Caesars Constantius and Galerius, and resolved to remove their unwelcome colleague in the north; but they failed, because they could by no means cross the Channel. Their work was done for them, however, when Carausius was assassinated by his ambitious

## The Empire in Decline



### CONSTANTIUS ENTERS LONDON

In 296 Britain was in the power of the usurper Allectus when Constantius Chlorus, father of Constantine, sent an army to crush him, and later himself took over the administration of the island. This gold medallion, the only known Roman representation of London, shows him welcomed by the genius of the city.

*British Museum*

but incompetent lieutenant Allectus in 293. In 296 the lieutenant of Constantius evaded the fleet of Allectus, effected a landing in Britain, and easily crushed the usurper; a tyrant who depended not, like Carausius, on loyal subjects, but on bands of hired Frankish adventurers. No reconquest was called for; the whole province welcomed Constantius on his arrival, and continued to prosper under his able and enlightened rule till his death in A.D. 306.

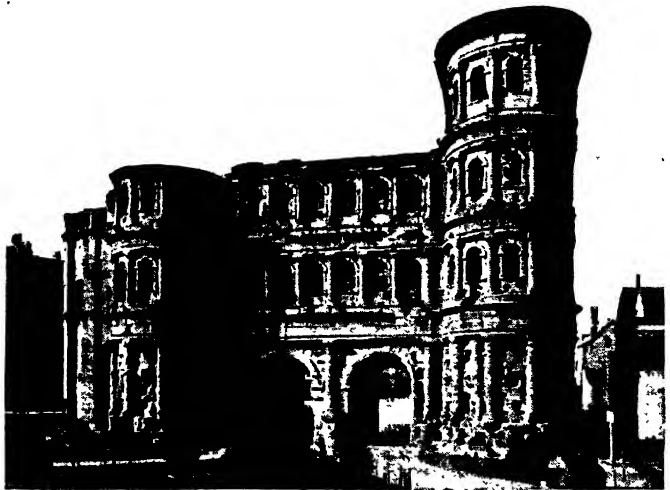
Diocletian, however, found another Persian war forced upon him. For Tiridates, the son of that Chosroes of Armenia who was the ally of Alexander Severus, had recovered the kingdom from which he had been ejected when an infant by the Persian Sapor, but was now again driven out by Narses, a descendant of Sapor. Rome could not be deaf to the appeal of her ally and protégé. In 297 Galerius was summoned from the Danube to take the field as Diocletian's lieutenant on the Euphrates. Over-rashness brought on him a heavy defeat at Carrhae, from which he barely escaped with his life. He was, however, allowed to redeem the disaster by another campaign, in which he won a

decisive victory, enabling Diocletian to dictate a treaty which the Persian could accept without humiliation, followed by a peace which endured for forty years.

It was perhaps the sense that the Christian Church was an organization apart from the state, and demanding from its members an obedience which might be inconsistent with obedience to the state, that caused Diocletian to let loose the severest persecution to which that body, for some

time almost immune, had yet been subjected. How the Church had grown may be read in Chapter 80. There is no doubt that he was urged on by his half-barbarian colleagues Maximian and Galerius; Constantius, a man of cultivation and superior birth and breeding, would have nothing to do with it in his quarter of the Empire.

The persecution was in full swing when Diocletian, at the height of his power and prestige, resigned the imperial diadem which Aurelian had been the first to



### NORTH GATE OF AUGUSTA TREVIRORUM

Made the capital of Gaul by Diocletian, and the administrative centre of the western provinces, Augusta Trevirorum—the modern Trèves—was the favourite residence of Constantine, during whose reign this noble gateway, the Porta Nigra, was probably built. There are many other Roman relics in the city.

*Photo, E.N.A.*

## Chronicle XII. A.D. 211-330

assume, and retired to cultivate his garden unencumbered by cares of state (A.D. 305). Maximian, overborne by his colleague's stronger will, resigned at the same time. Galerius and Constantius automatically became Augusti, and two new Caesars took their places. Ignoring the claims of Constantine the son of Constantius, and Maxentius the son of Maximian, Diocletian, by his last public act, confirmed the selection made by Galerius of his nephew Daza, better known as Maximin, and an undistinguished adherent, Severus.

### Struggle for the Supremacy

**C**ONSTANTIUS retained the western division, his headquarters being at Augusta Trevirorum, the modern Trèves or Trier. Galerius took the Danube and Asia Minor. Severus was sent to Milan, Maximin to the East. Constantine, who was now thirty-three and had already distinguished himself in the Eastern wars, hastened to join his father, whose health was very precarious. Fifteen months later, in 306, Constantius died at York, and Constantine was able to inform Galerius that he had been compelled by the legions to accept the succession without waiting for formal appointment. Galerius dared only to ratify his accession as the junior Caesar, while Severus became the second Augustus.

Constantine, however, was not the only person dissatisfied. Maximian was thirsting to resume the honours he had so unwillingly resigned. The Roman Senate wanted to reassert itself, and, incited no doubt by the ex-emperor, proclaimed his son Maxentius Augustus. Maximian emerged from his retirement to support his son with his own military ability and prestige. Severus, marching hot-foot from Milan, found that Rome was already lost, and fled to Ravenna, but was tricked by Maximian into surrender, and was then required to end his own life. Maximian then himself resumed the title he had resigned, and, to win from Constantine the support he could hardly afford not to give, offered him his daughter Fausta in marriage, and the title of Augustus. Constantine accepted both offers, but without committing himself too deeply.

Maximian prepared to defend Italy against the impending invasion of Galerius.

Galerius with his legions from Illyricum, came, saw, and—retreated. All Italy was against him, and could only be won by a long series of sieges, which was out of the question. Returning to the East, he handed over the command in Illyria to his countryman and friend Licinius, nominating him Augustus in the room of Severus. Thereupon Maximin demanded and extorted from him the higher title instead of that of Caesar; so that there were now six claimants to the name of Augustus.

Then in 308 Maximian and his son quarrelled, the soldiery declared for Maxentius, and for two years Maximian, refused an asylum by Galerius but harboured by Constantine, intrigued to recover power, till his repeated treacheries drove his son-in-law to require him to die as Severus had died. In the following year (311) Galerius too died of a loathsome disease, having retained his supremacy in the East undisputed to the end. His last act, whether dictated by remorse or by superstition, was the repeal of the persecuting decree against the Christians.

### Constantine's Victory over Maxentius

**O**F the four surviving Augusti three had no present desire to challenge a struggle for supremacy. But when it became obvious that Maxentius was preparing to attack Constantine, the iniquities of the rule of the former in Africa and Italy warranted his rival in anticipating the blow and striking first, in the character of liberator. In 312 he swooped through the Alps, shattered two opposing armies at Turin and Verona, and finally wiped out Maxentius under the walls of Rome at the decisive battle of the Mulvian Bridge.

Tradition, resting on statements made by Constantine himself, affirms that he had seen a vision of the Cross displayed in the sky, with the inscription, 'by this standard thou shalt conquer.' Whether he saw, imagined, or invented the vision none knows nor ever shall know. The two fundamental facts remain: that Constantine made himself the champion not of the Christian creed, but of the Christian body, and that he did



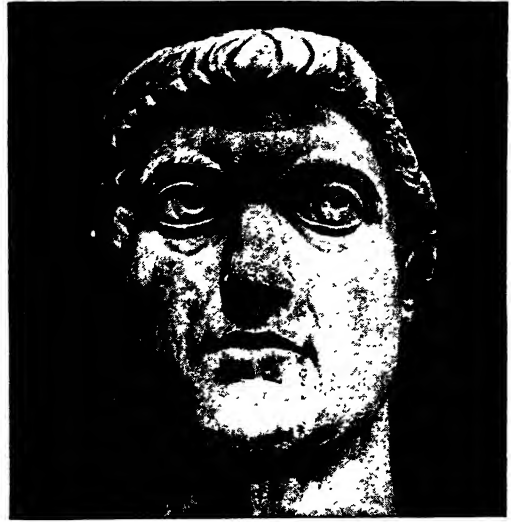
## The Empire in Decline

not become a member of the Christian body by the rite of baptism till twenty-five years had passed. He accepted and retained the official dignity of Pontifex Maximus, high priest of the immemorial religion of Rome, and he sanctioned his own deification; but he placed Christianity in the category of religions sanctioned and no longer proscribed officially; and once that was done the magnificent organization of the Church, a brotherhood spread over the whole Empire, ensured that it should have no rival. No other religion had that element of brotherhood.

The West hailed the victory of Constantine joyfully. To the Roman Senate he spoke comfortable words which meant nothing, and they responded by the pronouncement, which also meant nothing, that he was the supreme Augustus. Licinius had viewed the overthrow of Maxentius with entire good will, though he gave no direct assistance; whatever the Roman Senate might be pleased to say was of no account to him; and when in 313 Constantine issued from Milan the decree which was the charter of Christianity, Licinius published it on his own account with perfect equanimity, and with some advantage to himself in the contest now rashly forced upon him by the third (and in actual fact the senior) Augustus. Maximin, utterly crushed in a swift campaign, died by his own hand. The families of Maxentius and Maximin alike were obliterated by the two victors. After the year 313 there were only two emperors, one in the East and one in the West.

### Final Triumph of Constantine

TEN years later there was only one emperor. As early as 314 Constantine found reason or excuse for attacking Licinius, but the forces of the rivals were so evenly matched that after one indecisive campaign, somewhat in Constantine's favour, they came to terms, fixing a boundary which left Licinius no more than a corner of Europe. For the next nine years Constantine was administering the West, completing the reorganization of the governmental machinery and of the army, and preparing for the final contest with Licinius. While Constantine was



CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

Constantine I began his reign in the West in 306, and by his defeat of Licinius in 323 became sole master of the Empire, when he transferred the seat of empire to Byzantium (Constantinople, dedicated in 330). He died May 22, 337.

*Conservatori, Rome; photo, Uragi*

welding his subjects together and winning their confidence, Licinius was alienating the forces which were in the ascendant but were already in his eyes engaged on the side of his adversary. When the crash came he made it a battle between Christianity and the old paganism, of which he posed as the champion in spite of his record in 313—and the fight, though stubborn, was fought and finished in the course of the single year 323. The fallen emperor shared the fate of Maximian and Severus. Never had any man enjoyed power so vast and at the same time so utterly undisputed as Constantine during the fourteen years of life that remained to him.

In the nine years when Constantine was undisputed master in the West, but only in Europe and Africa (in which we must remember that Roman terminology did not include Egypt), besides elaborating civil administration and reforming the army, he and his son Crispus had waged victorious wars against Germans and Goths, whose aggressions had been renewed. Not less vitally important, however, was the fact that an entirely new relation was established or inaugurated between the monarchy and the hitherto



officially unrecognized or actually proscribed Christian Church. The state had not concerned itself with creeds except where they led or were supposed to lead to anti-social or politically seditious activities; though it had required occasional conformity to ceremonial observances which had acquired a political significance, making exception only in favour of the Jews. The ground on which it had chosen Christianity for repression was precisely that the Church was a morally dangerous organization claiming for itself an authority higher than that of the state.

Constantius had realized that there were no more law-abiding subjects than the Christians; Constantine had discovered that the support of the Church was politically valuable. The result was a sort of informal concordat, the Church cementing its association with an emperor who was almost persuaded to be a Christian by appealing to him as arbiter on certain pressing questions of Church discipline on which it was divided; with the further effect that on the one hand what had been a purely religious brotherhood acquired a great and increasing political influence, while on the other the state invested itself with powers of ecclesiastical legislation.

#### **Official Recognition of Christianity**

**T**HE seal was placed on the new order when in A.D. 224 Constantine confirmed and extended the edict of Milan by a final edict of toleration, and in the following year presided over the General Council of the Church at Nicaea, which repudiated though it could not crush the Arian doctrine—henceforth condemned as ‘heresy’—concerning the Mystery of the Holy Trinity which continued to divide the Christian world for centuries to come.

Constantine reigned for twelve more years, till his death in 337, giving completeness to the system of which Diocletian had laid the foundations; but A.D. 330 has been taken as the terminal year of this Chronicle, as the moment when Rome yielded place to Constantinople as capital of the Empire, which remained in being for eleven centuries more. Rome indeed had

lost her primacy when Diocletian took up his own headquarters in the East, at Nicomedia. Constantine recognized the essential fact. But in his final struggle with Licinius he had learnt the enormous strategical value of Byzantium on the strait separating Asia from Europe; its commercial value was already conspicuous, though it was only one of the minor cities of the Empire.

He resolved to make it the Imperial City; for five years he planned and builded; he gave it his own name, the City of Constantine. In 330 the work was completed, with a lavish magnificence, and from that time, though lip-service continued to be rendered to the dignity of the city on the Tiber, the city on the Bosphorus was in fact the New Rome.

#### **The East : Gupta Dynasty in India**

**B**RIEFLY we must turn to the obscure annals of the farther East. Our materials provide us with no more than a note. In India the Scythian (Turkish?) dominion of Kushan is presumed to have broken up into satrapies early in the third century A.D., and it was while Constantine was reigning in the West that a new and powerful native dynasty, the Gupta, was founded in Oudh and Magadha by a second Chandragupta, whose first regnal year is dated 320 (see further in Chap. 91).

While Alexander Severus was reigning in the West and Ardashir was transforming the Parthian into the Persian dominion, the Han dynasty in China was wiped out and the empire was divided (220-265) for the period of the ‘Three Kingdoms’—North, South and West—after which it was more or less reunited under the western Chin dynasty (265-317), which in turn gave place to the eastern Chins. In central Asia the nondescript Scythian tribes of diverse races, mainly perhaps Mongol, owned no masters for long, but warred promiscuously with each other or with their neighbours to south, east, or west; by turns acknowledging or repudiating the sovereignty of the Chinese or the Persian overlord. The great westward eruption of the Huns was to come in the fifth century.

# TRADE AND COMMERCE OF THE ROMAN WORLD

A Study of Economic Conditions in Mediterranean Lands under the Aegis of the Roman Empire

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**I**N an earlier chapter of this history (Chapter 51) an account was given of the activities of traders in the Mediterranean area during the centuries which preceded the rise of Rome to predominance. It was shown that these activities were always hampered by the absence of political unity. While the countries which bordered on the Mediterranean were economically interdependent, Rome was the first state to bring them all under her control. At scarcely any period had the movement of commodities from one part of the ancient world to another been really free. At one time commercial intercourse was restricted by war, at another by piracy, and at another by the jealous policy of certain states, notably Carthage, who until her fall consistently attempted to monopolise the trade of the regions which she controlled (see Chap. 54). In spite of these obstacles the trader had always been a familiar figure in Mediterranean harbours, and had been prepared to run considerable risks in order to supply demands for raw materials or manufactures. Yet the merchant class must have been acutely conscious of the evils caused by political disunion, and to no section of the community can the final success of Rome have been more welcome.

Comparatively early in the history of Rome, while she was still merely an Italian power, her government had from time to time been forced to consider the interests of trade. As was pointed out in page 1548, she took vigorous measures to deal with Etruscan pirates before the annexation of her first transmarine province. The Greek commercial cities of southern Italy, though they acquired the Roman citizenship only in the first

century B.C., had long been allies of Rome and had looked to her to protect their economic interests. It is clear that the successes of the Roman Republic brought economic advantage to her allies at least as much as to her own citizens.

The Italians who controlled the free port of Delos, which after the fall of Corinth in 146 B.C. was the centre of trade in the Aegean, were almost entirely from the Greek cities, and it was a matter of small importance that they were not technically Roman citizens. Rome's success as leader of an Italian confederacy was due to the cause which later made her a successful ruler of the civilized world. Her Italian subjects were convinced that her interests were theirs, and that the ideal of a united Italy was a glorious one. The conquests of Rome were rarely due to a desire for gain, and her wars were rarely the result of 'capitalist' pressure. The economic advantages which resulted from her victories she shared with her subjects.

A less favourable judgement of the character of Roman imperialism is not unreasonably formed by those who have concentrated their attention on the last century of the Republic, a period about which we happen to have much information. During this century the Roman government was at its worst. The authority of the Senate had been completely undermined, and the great generals who struggled for supremacy were too much occupied in securing power for themselves to pay much attention to the good government of the Roman world.

Under these conditions opportunities for aggrandisement were open to un-

scrupulous men of every class. The provinces were exploited in the interests of individuals, and impoverished by the irregular demands for men and money imposed by the Roman generals. Enormous wealth was acquired by a small class of Italians, who regarded the provincials simply as a source of revenue. The success of Augustus in putting an end to this period of chaos and anarchy must have been welcome even to men of republican principles. 'The provinces,' says Tacitus, no uncritical admirer of despotism, 'did not dislike the new situation, for they distrusted the government of the Senate and People because of the rivalry between the leading men and the rapacity of officials, while the protection of the laws was unavailing, as they were thwarted by violence, intrigue, and finally by corruption.'

It was then impossible for Roman rule to bring prosperity to the world unless a strong government was established in Rome itself, and it was fortunate for the world that the system established by

Augustus was for more than two hundred years never seriously challenged. The excesses of a Nero or a Domitian affected a comparatively small class, whose point of view is unduly prominent in the literature of the time. The chaos which followed the death of Nero was an object lesson of the necessity for stable government. The 'Roman peace' which was made possible by the victory of Augustus over Antony brought in its train unparalleled economic prosperity, and the first two centuries of the principate can be regarded as one of the golden ages of the world's history.

The extent of the Roman Empire was largely determined by geography. In order to secure the safety of the Mediterranean lands it was necessary for Rome to extend her boundaries until they reached frontiers which could be easily defended. In conquering northern Gaul and fixing the Rhine as the limit of Roman rule Caesar was completing the work of Marius, who had flung back German hordes from the civilized south. In the



#### INDUSTRY IN ROMAN GAUL IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF OUR ERA

In Gaul especially did trade prosper under the Roman aegis. These bas-reliefs show (left) a cobbler astride his bench making a shoe and (right) a shopkeeper pointing up to his shelves stocked with boxes and bottles of toilet accessories. The centre relief shows what may be either a pharmacy or a soap factory—Gallic soap was largely used as a hair dye—with a woman stirring the contents of a basin over a stove and an assistant attending to another tub.

*Reims, Epinal and Rouen; photos, Les archives photographiques d'art et d'histoire*

early principate the Rhine was regarded as the boundary which separated civilization from barbarism, and the Romanised Germans of Cologne were taught to regard their kinsfolk across the river as savages. It was indeed the consistent policy of Rome to persuade the inhabitants of what is now France that Italy and not Germany was their 'spiritual home,' and her success in doing this was one of her greatest triumphs (see further, Chap. 83).

The advantages that Roman rule brought to Gaul were conferred equally upon Britain (see Chap. 77), upon the provinces along the Danube and upon regions such as Mauretania which were annexed in the first instance to serve as buffers between civilization and barbarism. At first, it is true, there was discontent in many quarters, and Rome was called upon to suppress 'nationalist' movements, such as the Pannonian rising of A.D. 6, the Gallic risings of A.D. 21 and 69, and the British revolt under Boadicea in A.D. 60; but as the advantages of Roman rule were realized such troubles became exceedingly rare. Rome maintained her control of newly conquered provinces by securing the adhesion of influential individuals. Caesar conferred citizen rights on Gallic nobles, who, by the time of Claudius, were clamouring for admission to the Senate itself. The centres of emperor worship served as rallying-points for the friends of Rome in the provinces. Thus the altar of 'Roma et Augustus,' set up at Lyons in 12 B.C., saw the 'loyalists' meet year by year in the 'concilium Galliarum' (Council of the Gauls), and hold in turn the dignified office of provincial priest. This very political form of religion played a similar part in other provinces, and it is significant that the fury of Boadicea's followers was specially directed against the temple of the deified Claudius at Colchester.

While the measures which have been described—the gift of the citizenship and membership of the provincial councils—served to win for Rome the loyalty of the

more politically minded inhabitants of newly conquered districts, the devotion of a different stratum of the population was secured by the economic advantages which followed from Roman rule. Traders from Mediterranean lands had indeed penetrated into Britain and Gaul long before their annexation, but their activities were irregular and risky. An immediate result of Roman conquest was the opening up of new markets and the development of the natural resources of economically backward countries; Gaul, for instance, as a consequence of peace and improved communications, became by the second century one of the richest provinces of the Empire. The very presence on the Rhine of a large Roman army brought much money into the country, for the government seems to have purchased locally what was required by the troops.

As will be shown, the commercial policy of Rome was a generous one. Rarely was any attempt made to foster Italian trade and industry at the expense of the provinces; indeed, in Gaul and elsewhere,



#### CAPITAL AND LABOUR IN GAUL

This relief depicts a business man seated at his desk, on which he is pouring out coins from a purse; paying or perhaps lending money to the peasant client talking eagerly on the other side of the table. Above, a merchant in Gallo-Roman costume making entries in his ledger.

*Sens and Arlon Museums; from Esplanadien, 'Recueil générale des bas-reliefs de la Gaule romaine'*

Italian imports were sometimes ousted from the market by native products. For instance, before the end of the first century A.D. the red glazed Gallic pottery, so familiar under the name of 'Samian' to visitors to Roman museums, had completely superseded the Italian ware of the same character, and was exported to other provinces and even to Italy itself. This is only one example of the industrial and commercial activities of Gaul. The wine trade and the clothing industry, illustrated by the famous monuments of Trèves, were equally important. Full use was made of the facilities for transport provided by the river system, and at the chief centres the sailors organized themselves into guilds which have left many records. The Romans improved

provincial rivals, and were sometimes defeated in the contest. Professor Ros'tovtzeff has pointed out the absence of any legislation concerning patents. 'Everybody was free to imitate and even to counterfeit the products of a rival.'

At the end of the Republic there had been a serious danger that 'capitalist' interests should have too much influence in politics, but this danger seems to have passed away after the foundation of the principate. Certainly in the period with which we are concerned the government was not dominated by industrialists. This may have been because in the Roman Empire industry was organized on a comparatively small scale, or we may attribute to the early Roman emperors a reasoned belief in the principle of free competition



**MERCHANTMEN THAT CARRIED ON THE OVERSEAS TRADE WITH ROME**

In the second century of our era the overseas trade with Rome attained vast dimensions. The bulk of it was in foodstuffs, especially corn, wine and oil, and the largest customer was the imperial government, which granted special protection and privileges to the 'collegia' or guilds, of merchants and shipowners. The official relations of these guilds with the government are indicated by the Corporation Hall and the vast storehouses for the imperial 'annona' at Ostia (see page 1874).

*Ny Carlsberg Museum, Copenhagen*

the roads and facilitated the movement not merely of troops but of traders.

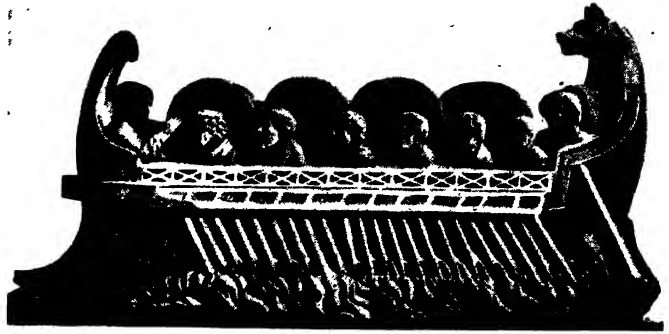
In this chapter we are primarily concerned with the commercial policy of Rome, and only secondarily with her political generosity and her administrative genius. This policy was an extremely liberal one; the principle of 'free trade within the empire' was accepted and consistently acted upon. The import and export dues which were levied on certain frontiers consisted in a fixed proportion of the value of the goods and were not intended to be protective. The products of Italian industry were, as we have seen, forced to compete on equal terms with

and a distrust of government interference in trade and industry. Whatever the reason, it is certain that while the foreign policy of the early principate sometimes aimed at the fostering of trade, it was never dictated by any particular group of capitalists. At few periods of history have such good chances of success been presented to able individuals.

The economic policy of the government must have been affected by the fact that it was itself a large purchaser of goods, and thus had a motive for fostering cheap production. We have seen that the presence of the Rhine army stimulated production in Gaul, and the same can doubtless be

said of the other provinces in or near which Roman troops were stationed. In the third century A.D., as in the first century B.C., the presence of troops was a curse rather than a blessing, but this was because the prevalence of civil war, the weakness of the central government and the depreciation of the coinage had revived the practice of forced requisitions. Between Augustus and the Antonines supplies required by the government from provincials were normally paid for, and it was the duty of governors, as we know in the case of Agricola, to prevent individuals from making undue profit out of the provision of corn for the soldiers. In Rome itself the government, being responsible for the feeding of the city, required large supplies of grain. Much of this was supplied gratis by the provinces of Egypt and Africa, which paid their tribute in kind; but a large part of what was needed had to be paid for, and the government was concerned with the regulation of the price.

A government responsible for the feeding and clothing of so many men must have been concerned with means of transport. It is therefore not surprising to find that shipowners were encouraged by the Roman government; Nero exempted ships from property tax, and emperors of the second century conferred privileges on their owners, notably freedom from the burdens which were already falling on the shoulders of municipal senators. Though it is uncertain what was the exact relation of the guilds of shipowners and merchants to the



RIVER TRANSPORT IN THE PROVINCES

Many monuments testify to the large use of river transport for merchandise. This sculpture, found at Neumagen, shows a barge with a cargo of wine barrels. Six oarsmen are visible on the port side—though the oars number twenty-two—rowing to the time set them by a man in the bows clapping his hands.

Trèves Museum

state, it is legitimate to suppose that these favours involved a certain amount of state control, such as an obligation to take government work if required and to render service in time of war.

The dangers latent in the situation were not very obvious in the first two centuries, when the government was inclined to encourage individual initiative, but from the third century onwards the demands made by the state on the 'collegia' of merchants were so heavy that they lost all power of enterprise. In this matter, as in others, it is possible to find in the Golden Age the germs of a disease destined to do great harm in the period of decline. The early emperors normally discouraged the formation of associations, even when their objects seemed merely social; if, then, we find positive encouragement of guilds of shipowners we may assume that state control was always a possibility.

Under the favourable conditions prevailing in the early principate enormous



MAN POWER FOR BARGES PLYING ON THE MOSELLE

Augusta Trevirorum—the modern Trèves—was the first Roman city on the Moselle, and was organized as a colony about A.D. 50. It speedily became the economic centre of the rich district of the Moselle and the Meuse, where agriculture, cattle-breeding and viticulture, and also textile and other industries, were developed on capitalistic lines. This relief from the pillar monument of the Secundini family at Igel, near Trèves, shows two men towing a barge laden with heavy merchandise up the Moselle.

From Esperandieu 'Recueil générale des bas-reliefs de la Gaule romaine'

**MERCHANTMAN FROM UTICA**

Utica threw in its lot with Rome in the Third Punic War, and after the fall of Carthage it became a free city, and later a Roman colony. Until its harbour silted up it was a busy seaport.

*British Museum*

wealth was acquired by individual provincials, most of whom derived it from some form of trade or industry; many of their names have survived on inscriptions recording donations made to philanthropic objects. To an enterprising provincial the whole world was open. Traders from the eastern provinces were familiar in Gaul and Britain, and representatives of all parts of the Roman Empire met in such centres as Lyons, Aquileia or Antioch. For probably the first time in history the Mediterranean was practically free from pirates, thanks to the Roman fleet. If journeys by land were still not without their dangers, it must be remembered how much safer it was to travel in Asia Minor in the days of S. Paul than it is at present, and how very recently the highwayman has disappeared from England.

Another advantage which Roman rule conferred on the world was a stable and uniform currency, the collapse of which in the third century produced ruin and misery. The Roman government controlled all the gold and silver in circulation, and during the first two centuries was wise enough to avoid any serious

depreciation of the coinage. The 'argentarii' of this period had practically ceased to be money changers and had come to perform many of the functions of the modern banker; they certainly kept money on deposit and made advances to customers. The question as to how far they financed trade and industry is one which it is impossible to answer. The money-lender was quite a familiar figure in the Roman Empire and the imperial treasury itself lent money to individuals. To make advances to traders was not as risky a proceeding as it had been in fourth-century Athens, but it is on the whole likely that the merchant looked for assistance rather to the private capitalist than to the banker, who was responsible for other people's money.

Under these favourable conditions inter-provincial trade flourished during the first two centuries of the Christian era. Almost all the necessities of life could be

**ROMAN BANKERS IN THE PROVINCES**

Wherever Roman colonisation extended capitalistic development followed and the banker became a familiar figure. Here we see a banker in Pannonia—Roman, by his dress—counting his day's takings; and, above, another with two Roman clerks receiving payment from Celtic peasants of the Moselle region.

*Trèves and Belgrade Museums*



produced somewhere in the Roman Empire, and districts which required imports had generally something to export in return. Thus Italy, which imported corn, exported wine; and in most provinces there was a demand for the olive oil of Spain and Africa, for the linen, paper and glass of Alexandria and Syria, and for the metals of Spain and the Danubian provinces. It is probable that not till the nineteenth century did greater facilities exist for the disposal of raw materials and manufactures in comparatively distant markets.

But the traders of this period did not confine their activities within the limits of the Roman Empire. Although it is clear from the Germania of Tacitus that in the reign of Trajan all that lay beyond the Rhine and Danube was almost as much of a terra incognita as it had been in the days of Herodotus, and although Germany did not share in the economic prosperity which resulted from the Roman conquest of Gaul, finds of Roman coins in North Germany, Poland and even Scandinavia show that Roman trade penetrated into these regions. Amber

from the Baltic continued to reach the Mediterranean in large quantities, and the elaborate arrangements made for the collection of customs on the Danube prove the existence of considerable commerce with the barbarians. Rome was influenced by economic as well as by military considerations in her attempts to maintain friendly relations with them.

More important than her trade with the North was the trade of the Roman Empire with the East. This was essentially concerned with such luxuries as silk, perfumes, ivory and pepper. During the early principate commerce with India was fostered by the Roman government, which was on friendly terms with the native rulers, and the study of geographical handbooks shows that by the second century a fair amount of information was available about regions as distant as the Malay Peninsula. In spite of the barrier presented by the Parthian Empire, Roman merchants managed to penetrate into the heart of Asia and reach the borders



**GOODS TRANSPORT IN SYRIA**

In ancient as in modern times donkeys and camels were the principal draught animals in the East. This terra-cotta statuette of a kneeling camel with panniers full of country produce on its back was found in Syria.

*British Museum*

of China in search of the silk which fashionable society coveted. It is very probable that the interest shown by Rome in Armenia, in the Caucasus and in the south coast of the Caspian Sea can be explained by a desire to keep open the land route to China for enterprising traders. Like the amber of the North, the silk of the East was a magnet, drawing men afar in the hope of profit.

The picture which has been drawn of the economic conditions of the Roman Empire is a very favourable one, but most of what has been said is, unfortunately, only true of the earlier part of its history. The three conditions essential to economic prosperity—stable government, internal peace and a sound currency—which were established by Augustus, may be said to have continued almost till the extinction of the dynasty of the Severi in A.D. 235, though signs of the approaching disaster had not been wanting. The terrible year which followed the death of Nero showed how fragile were the foundations on which the government rested, and how liable to recur were the chaotic conditions from which the victory of Augustus had saved the world. During the fifty years that followed the death of Alexander Severus in 235 the imperial title was borne by nearly as many individuals as during the two centuries and



a half which had preceded, and the Roman Empire was the scene not only of civil strife but of invasions by barbarian tribes, who took advantage of its internal troubles to overrun its territories.

These invasions were indeed repelled by such emperors as Gallienus and Aurelian, but their effect on the economic life of the Roman world was great. The practice of requisitioning what was needed for the armies was revived, and the provinces suffered as they had not suffered since the days of Caesar and Pompey. The result of all this was an impoverishment from which the Empire never completely recovered even under the more stable government of the fourth century. In the second century wealthy provincials had been able to buy imported luxuries and make generous donations to the cities in which they lived. In the later Empire such wealthy men as survived were exposed to the ruthless demands of the tax collector, and the mass of the population was too poor to purchase more than the cheap products

**Enterprise fettered by State Socialism** of local industry. The state tended to monopolise the activities of the shipowners, who were organized in guilds with hereditary membership and were required to provide for the needs of the government under conditions imposed from above. There was little scope for enterprise under a system of state socialism.

It has been noted above that the existence of a sound currency is an indispensable condition of economic prosperity. This fact, which was well known to the Greeks and to the Romans of the Republic, was fully recognized by the emperors of the first two centuries, and in the literature of this period we find no complaints of the quality of the coinage. It is, indeed, true that the silver coins of Marcus Aurelius were lighter than they had been under Augustus, but until the end of the second century the gold aureus suffered little depreciation and was willingly accepted in payment for goods by countries outside the Empire. The balance of trade with these countries had always been unfavourable to Rome, and imports had been to a large extent paid

for in cash. The almost complete cessation of the Roman gold coinage in the third century was fatal to foreign trade, which seems almost to have died out, though it revived to some extent later when gold was restored to circulation and the small class of wealthy men demanded the products of the East.

The collapse of the coinage in the third century produced a phenomenon with which Europe has been very familiar since the Great War, but which was quite new to the ancient world. Internal trade was rendered almost impossible by the constant changes in the value of the currency, and we find a revival of the system of barter. **Fatal effects of depreciated currency** which when Tacitus wrote of Germany he regarded as a feature of barbarism. The system of taxation which had caused few complaints in the first and second centuries had to be altered. The policy of demanding from their subjects payments in kind which the earlier emperors had employed but sparingly became normal and was continued by the emperors of the fourth century in spite of the improvement in the currency.

It is impossible to suppose that the later Roman emperors were not aware of the disastrous effect on the economic life of the Empire which was involved in their method of taxation, and it is only fair to recognize that they had to face problems unknown to their more fortunate predecessors. In the first two centuries of the Christian era the danger of barbarian invasion was not a serious one, and a comparatively small army distributed along the frontiers was able to maintain the safety of the Empire and to enable its inhabitants to acquire wealth and civilization. In the later days the very existence of the Empire was at stake, and those who were responsible for its defence considered themselves justified in using all the means at their disposal for the performance of their task. The prosperity of the period between Augustus and the Antonines was due not only to the wise policy of the government but to the existence of conditions making it possible to maintain the Pax Romana without overstraining the resources of the Empire.

## BRITAIN AS A ROMAN PROVINCE

Civil and Military Life in one of the Foreign Lands on  
which Rome imposed her Sway and her Civilization

By Sir GEORGE MACDONALD K.C.B. LL.D. D.Litt.

Late President of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies; Author of *The Roman Wall in Scotland*, etc.

THE Romans were a practical people, and their Empire was built on eminently practical lines. Throughout all the centuries of its long life it retained the character stamped on it by its founder Augustus, whose ideal has been well described as the creation of 'a commonwealth of self-governing cities.' Its forty-five provinces, each organized as a separate unit, fell into two main classes—those exposed to the risk of barbarian attack and therefore requiring a garrison to defend them, and those which were so situated that they could afford to dispense with military protection. The former were under the direct supervision of the emperor as commander-in-chief of the army. The latter were controlled, nominally at least, through the medium of the Senate. While this distinction involved considerable differences in matters of lesser import, it left unaffected the fundamental principles which regulated the policy of the central administration. Of these not the least noteworthy was a readiness to adapt the form of government to local conditions. Imperial and senatorial provinces alike enjoyed a generous measure of 'home rule.'

In the circumstances no one province can be said to have been typical of the whole. Least of all would the epithet be appropriate for 'the Northern Island sunder'd once from all the human race.' The soil of Britain was relatively poor, while its climate was woefully unlike that of the more favoured lands which fringed the Mediterranean basin. Vineyards and olive groves were unknown. Corn did indeed ripen; but its growth was less luxuriant, its harvesting more precarious than under kindlier skies. Nevertheless, in certain districts at all events, the

country was thickly peopled. Thus Julius Caesar writes of the 'infinite multitude' of its inhabitants and says that their dwelling-houses were 'very closely planted.' As he adds that they possessed a 'great number' of sheep and cattle, we may infer that it was a nation of shepherds and herdsmen which successfully resisted his invasions. It is hardly likely that in this respect any substantial change had taken place by A.D. 43, the date of the Claudian conquest, despite the civilizing process that had gone on steadily in the interval, as the result of growing contact with a Romanised Gaul.

During the subsequent occupation agriculture must have been more scientifically developed, and lead was extensively worked in various districts. Otherwise Britain's natural resources remained almost untapped, for coal-mining was unknown and the vast supplies of metal that the Empire demanded were drawn chiefly from Spain and the region of the Danube. Such industries as sprang up were in the main directed towards satisfying internal needs, and overseas commerce was of little account. Apart from other drawbacks, there was no such network of navigable rivers as made it easy for the Gaulish trader to convey his goods to points whence foreign markets were readily accessible.

**Neglect of Britain's  
natural resources**

Thus, even in its golden age, Roman Britain could not pretend to vie with its continental neighbours, Gaul and Spain, in wealth and luxury. The current of its intellectual life, too, ran more slowly. Yet it offers a singularly instructive field of study to those who would appreciate the twofold aspect of the work of Rome. On the one hand, it was an imperial province,



#### ROMANO-BRITISH PLOUGHMAN

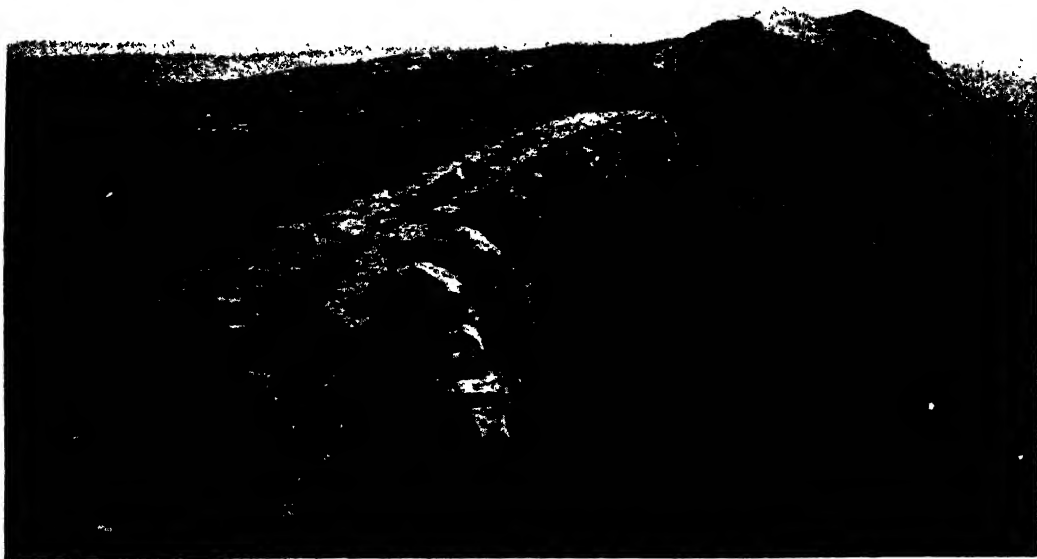
This bronze statuette, found at Piercebridge (Durham), gives a faithful picture of a British peasant in the days of the Roman occupation. The ploughman's hooded cloak is characteristically Celtic. The plough is drawn by oxen.

*British Museum*

and as such it provides an illuminating glimpse of the mighty instrument by which barbarism was kept at bay from the Caspian across Europe to the shores of the Western Ocean: nowhere is there a more impressive monument of the Empire's defences than the Tyne and Solway

frontier. On the other hand, securely sheltered by the army, much of the island enjoyed in normal times complete tranquillity, and there the march of civilization encountered no impediment: southern England and the Midlands became more or less thoroughly Romanised, and from their remains we can learn what Romanisation meant. A firm grasp of this division of Britain into a military and a civil area is essential to a proper understanding of the nature of the occupation.

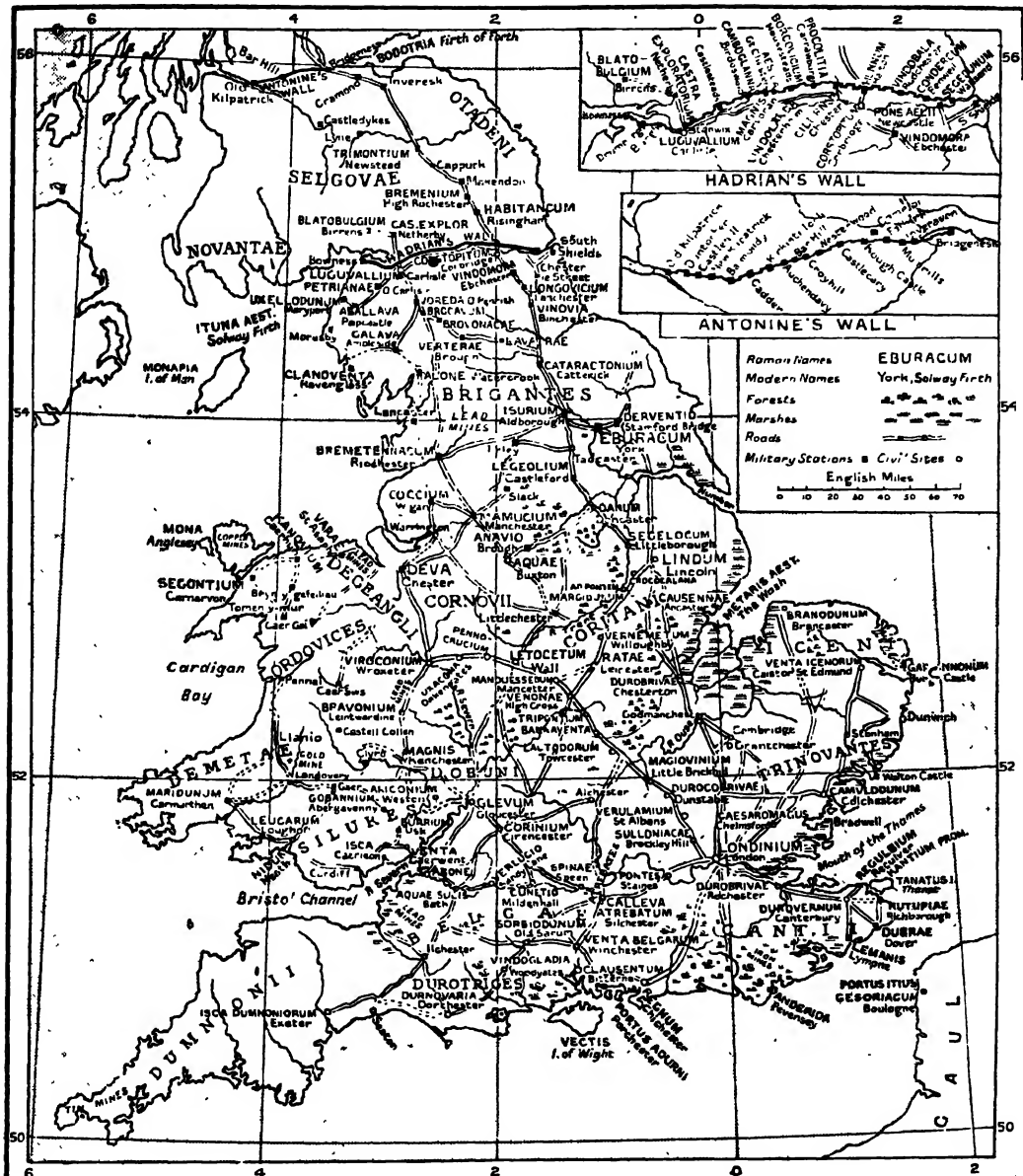
The boundary may be roughly defined as running from the Humber, by way of Chester, to the Bristol Channel. To the north and west lay the military area. The bleak expanse which fills so much of what is now northern England and southern Scotland was ill adapted to support a population devoted to the arts of peace as practised in the ancient world; for restless tribes of hunters and marauders it must have been ideal. The same is true of Wales. It is not surprising that in both these regions the Britons should have been little more than half subdued. If the smouldering fires were not to flare up into



#### HADRIAN'S WALL THAT PROTECTED BRITAIN AGAINST NORTHERN BARBARIANS

In the middle distance is Housesteads 'mile-castle,' with the Wall in front of it running west towards the summit of Winshields Crag (1,230 feet). The Wall, which extended from Tyne to Solway (73 miles), is 8 feet broad. Originally it was at least 12 or 14 feet high, and probably had a 4-foot breast-work on the north. It was defended by seventeen larger forts, smaller castles at every mile, and two turrets between each pair of mile-castles. The date is c. A.D. 125.

*Photo, John Gibson, Hexham*



### ROADS, TOWNS AND FORTRESSES OF BRITAIN IN ROMAN DAYS

Roman Britain was divided for administrative purposes into two distinct areas. The hilly and difficult region of the north and west—the military area—was guarded by the legionary fortresses of Caerleon, Chester and York, and was studded with smaller forts which were garrisoned by auxiliary regiments. The more level and fertile region of the south and east—the civil area—contained the towns and country houses. Both areas were covered by a network of roads.

*Based on the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain by permission*

open rebellion, the presence of strong military forces was essential.

Here accordingly we find Roman soldiers standing to their arms—the legions in fortresses at York and Chester and Caerleon-upon-Usk, the auxiliary cohorts in forts among the moors and hills beyond.

This method of distribution did not apply to Britain only; it was characteristic of the imperial provinces generally. The legionaries constituted the real fighting strength of the army, and they were concentrated at carefully selected points close to the outer edge of the more settled

portion of the country. But the Roman government could not afford to waste its most costly troops in mere guerrilla warfare. For that the less expensive auxiliaries were sufficient. They served as a buffer between the legions and the foe without.

Beyond the legionary fortresses, therefore, stretched a wide belt of territory, intersected by a network of strategic roads and guarded at regular intervals by forts or 'castella,' varying in size but usually capable of accommodating a single auxiliary cohort with a nominal strength of five hundred or a thousand men. On the extreme fringe of this debatable land, again, was the 'limes imperii,' the actual frontier of the Empire. The 'limes' might be a broad river like the Danube, or it might be an artificial barrier like the Wall between Tyne and Solway or the shorter-lived rampart between Forth and Clyde. In either case it, too, was protected by a chain of similar 'castella,' planted sufficiently near to one another to make communication easy. Permanently quartered in these 'castella,' the auxiliaries acted as a sort of military police, maintaining the 'Roman peace' on the marches, intercepting smugglers, and checking the raids of filibusters from beyond the pale. And, when occasion arose, they had a sterner task to perform, for it was on them that the brunt of the first onset of a frontier war invariably fell.

The civil area, which lay to the south and east of the line already indicated, was comparatively level, and barren tracts of moorland were as rare as hills of any height. Except where it was wooded, the

whole was well suited for tillage or for pasture. Many of its inhabitants had adopted the outward ways and even the actual speech of the Roman invaders. Towns were numerous, and every-day life in these was usually uneventful. Except

for the occasional passage of drafts bound for the northern or western front, the townsfolk can rarely have seen a Roman soldier, unless he were on furlough. Meanwhile their country neighbours, British farmers and British flockmasters, were free to go about their daily business with no thought of interference from any enemy more dangerous than the fickle seasons. They were the dwellers in the so-called 'Roman villas,' which were scattered in scores over southern and central England. The humbler members of the rural community were housed either in buildings that formed part of the larger villas or, just as they are to-day, in little hamlets of their own.

A more detailed description of the areas can best begin with the military zone. When not engaged in warfare or on field works, the

legions spent their time in barracks, each in its own particular fortress. Of the three legions included in the normal garrison of the island, the Second was stationed at Caerleon, the Sixth at York, and the Twentieth at Chester. At York and Chester cathedral cities now cover the site of the Roman fortresses; in both cases, although the course of the defending walls has been approximately determined, the plan of the interior is buried beyond hope of recovery. At Caerleon, on the other hand, there is



**TOMBSTONE FROM YORK**

This tombstone was set up by C. Aeresius of the Sixth Legion, in memory of his wife, who died at the age of 20, as well as of his two children (or step-children). It was also to be a memorial of himself; hence the family group.

*From Gordon Home, 'Roman York'*

still ample opportunity for scientific excavation.

So far as direct evidence goes, we can say little, except that in Britain, as often elsewhere, the legionary fortresses were near or on the banks of rivers, that they enclosed a space of about fifty acres, and that they were of the usual shape—oblong with rounded corners (see page 1729). It is, however, certain that their arrangements conformed generally to those of similar fortresses in other parts of the Empire. Outside the gates was the civil settlement, where were accommodated women and children, traders and time-expired veterans. Outside, too, were temples and places of recreation, like public baths, and an amphitheatre, such as that of which the ruins are still visible at Caerleon.

Much more is known about the auxiliary forts, quite a number of which have been carefully examined. They vary in size from eight or nine acres to two-and-a-half or even less, the majority lying somewhere between these extremes. In plan each of them was a legionary fortress in miniature. As, however, they were more liable to sudden attack, their defences



#### CONTRAST WITH HADRIAN'S WALL

This relief from the Column of Trajan shows the Danubian section of the frontier of the Empire, comparable with Agricola's line of forts in Britain, as it was before Hadrian introduced the system of continuous barriers. The soldiers are Roman auxiliaries. The block-houses are surrounded with wooden palisades and equipped with fire-signalling apparatus.

*From Cichorius, 'Die Traianssäule'*

were relatively stronger; some of those in North Britain were girt by as many as five or six ditches. Another difference was the larger space allotted to the store-houses; the risk of communications being cut was greater, and as a precaution each fort was provisioned for a year.

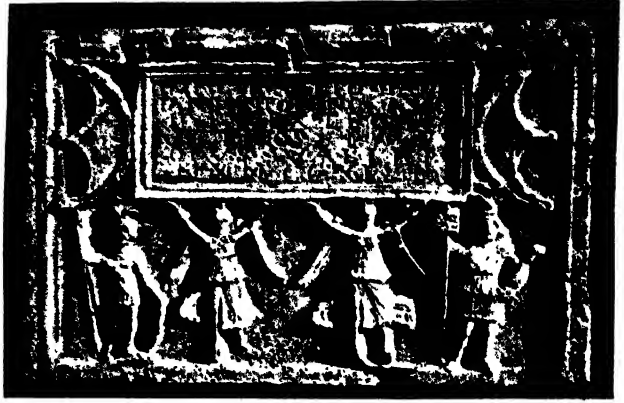
The harvest of relics recovered by the spade enables us to form some idea of how their occupants lived. We can even see them at play on gala days when the horse-men indulged in a sport very like the medieval tournament; the weapons used were of wood, and the jousters were gaily appressed and wore richly ornamented helmets with masks. Abundant remains of decorated pottery and a few elegant bronze decanters point to a reasonably high standard of comfort among the officers. Wine and oil, brought from the continent in huge jars, must have been freely used by all ranks. Cereals and vegetables were the staple foods, but oyster shells and the bones of slaughtered oxen tell of a more generous diet. Shoes of all sizes, down to the tiniest, trinkets, weaving-combs, children's toys and the like bear silent witness to the presence of the soldiers' wives and families. Some of these latter objects are identical with those



#### SECTION THROUGH THE ROMAN WALL IN SCOTLAND

The stone base of the Wall of Antoninus is 14 feet broad, and the superstructure, formed of sods for the greater part of the distance of 37 miles from Forth to Clyde, may once have been 10 feet high. There were 19 forts, at intervals of 2 miles.

*Photo, Annan*



#### DISTANCE SLABS FROM THE SCOTTISH WALL

These stone tablets were dedicated to Antoninus Pius by the soldiers who built the wall from Forth to Clyde that bears his name. Each records the name of the legion to which the detachment that set it up belonged, and also the exact number of feet in the allotted length of which it commemorates the completion. Both of these have winged victories as their motifs. That on the left was erected by a 'vexillatio' (detachment) of the Twentieth Legion; that on the right, of the Sixth.

*From Macdonald, 'The Roman Wall in Scotland'; photos, Annan*

found on native sites, and not a few of them bear the stamp of unmistakable British craftsmanship. We may infer that there was much coming and going, that intermarriage was common. The influence of all this must have been mutual. Even in the outlying districts the Britons would become to some extent Romanised. Though played upon an ampler stage,

life in the legionary fortresses was doubtless essentially the same as life in the lonelier outposts. While the two classes of soldier differed in status, they nevertheless had much in common. Both consisted of long-service men, and both were subject to the same iron discipline. The auxiliaries became Roman citizens when they received their discharge, and the



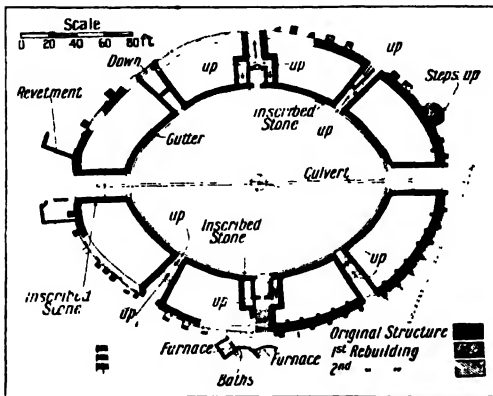
#### MULTIPLE DITCHES THAT DEFENDED THE AUXILIARY FORT OF ARDOCH

The defences of this Perthshire fort are among the most remarkable of the Roman remains in Britain. The road from the gate is here seen passing out through the multiple ditches that protect the rampart. Such elaborate fortifications occur mainly in the north (for example, at Whitley Castle in Northumberland and at Birrens in Dumfriesshire), and must be regarded as a tribute to the impetuous courage of the foe from whom attack was apprehended.

*Photo, T. & R. Annan*

legionaries were Roman citizens from the outset; Roman citizens, however, only in the same sense as were Saint Paul and the chief captain who proposed to scourge him. They were not natives of Rome.

The higher officers, it is true, usually came from beyond the Alps. Not so those whom they commanded. Probably most of the legionaries who crossed the Channel with the original army of invasion in the reign of Claudius were of Italian birth. But before the end of the first century Italy had ceased to be a recruiting ground. Henceforward the men enrolled to keep the garrison of Britain up to strength, when they were not the sons of serving soldiers, were levied chiefly in Gaul and



the Low Countries. Doubtless Britain itself was drawn on too. But, though Britain provided the Roman army with much first-rate fighting material, British recruits were usually drafted into overseas regiments. That was the case, at all events, during the earlier period of the occupation, although even then there may have been frequent exceptions. A tombstone from Stirlingshire, for example, commemorates a native of north-eastern England who enlisted at the age of twenty-one and died nine years later on the Forth and Clyde Wall.

Numerous dedications give us a glimpse into the minds of the soldiery. There was a shrine for the worship of the

emperor in the heart of every fortress and of every fort. Otherwise, polytheism was rampant. Thus, one and the same man—a centurion of the Second Legion—pays his vows, not only to 'Jupiter Best and Greatest,' but also to Diana and Apollo, to Mars, Minerva, the Mothers of the Parade Ground, Hercules, the Celtic goddess Epona and Victory, and even to the Genius or Guardian Spirit of the Land of Britain. Somewhat different in character are the altars which preserve the uncouth names of strange Gallic or Teutonic deities, proving that little congregations of Gauls and Germans would club together to keep alive a cult they had brought with them from beyond the seas. Reliefs portraying the mysterious three Mother Goddesses of Gallic mythology occur again and again.

Of Christianity, on the other hand, there is in the military zone no trace. Mithras, however, the Eastern god of light, had at least two devoted bands of worshippers on the Wall of Hadrian. And he had similar bands elsewhere. He was a special favourite with the army, and it is probable that Mithraic relics should always be associated with the military element in the population, even when they come to light within the civil area. That is



**WHERE THE SECOND LEGION WATCHED THE GAMES**  
Most imposing of the Roman remains at Caerleon is the amphitheatre: an oval embankment of earth retained by concentric walls and pierced by masonry entrances. •Down the major axis, 265 feet in length, runs a stone conduit. The spectators probably sat on wooden seats ranged in tiers on the bank.

Plan, courtesy of Dr Morris Wheeler: photo, Surrey Flying Services





#### PARADE AND SERVICE HELMETS OF BRITAIN'S ROMAN GARRISON

Not a few Roman helmets have come to light in Britain. The two on the right (from Guisborough, Yorkshire, and Witcham Gravel, Ely, respectively), though rather elaborate, were probably intended for service use; the bronze crown of the one with loose cheek-pieces is tinned. The specimen, however, from Ribchester on the left, with its detachable mask-vizor, was no more than the parade equipment of the Celtic cavalry. The crown is embossed with horse and foot in combat.

*British Museum*

certainly the case with the characteristic Mithraic sculpture found towards the end of last century in London.

The mention of London brings us to the towns of Roman Britain. Two of them, Carlisle and Corbridge-on-Tyne, lay within the military area, and had therefore a character of their own. They were centres for distributing supplies to the forts on the frontier, as well as holiday resorts for the soldiers during their brief intervals of

leave. But they were not typical Romano-British towns. To find such towns we must turn to the civil area.

There London was pre-eminent. Of its beginnings we know nothing. If it existed in Julius Caesar's time, it can only have been as a mere village, too obscure to be alluded to by name. Its real birth perhaps coincided with the awakening which his invasions brought. With the permanent establishment of the Roman dominion



#### HEADQUARTERS OF THE LEGION THAT WATCHED NORTH-EASTERN ENGLAND

About A.D. 75 the Romans advanced to York and established a legionary fortress there. The Ninth Legion formed the original garrison, but some fifty years later it was annihilated in a frontier war and was replaced by the Sixth. York continued to be the headquarters of the Sixth Legion till the end of the occupation of the island. The multangular tower, which appears above in the foreground, is one of the bastions by which the wall was strengthened in the course of the fourth century.

*Photo, Major Gordon Home*

under Claudius it became a place of consequence at once. Tacitus tells us that by A.D. 61 it was already 'much frequented by merchants and full of goods.' Its rapid rise is to be explained by its unique geographical position. Situated on a navigable river and within easy reach of the nearest part of the continent, it was likewise the natural gateway to the interior of the island. The advent of a garrison of 40,000 men, accompanied by the host of officials who were to administer the new province, created an immediate demand for imports on an unprecedented scale. The goods, we may suppose, were brought by sea to London, whence they found their way to their various destinations along the system of well made roads which the invaders lost no time in laying out and which they steadily developed. The three main routes were Ermine Street leading through Huntingdonshire to Lincoln and the north, Watling Street which ran across the Midlands to Wroxeter and Chester, and a southern highway which made for Silchester whence it branched off to Gloucester, Caerleon and Exeter.

It was thus as the great business emporium of the province that London came into being, and it retained that character till the end. The innumerable chance discoveries of Roman remains, often far beneath the present surface, testify to its prosperity. Of its extent we can form a good idea from the traces of its walls which still survive either actually or in record. It lay on the Middlesex shore between the Tower and Ludgate Hill, its northern limit being represented by the street which we know as London Wall. The area was about 325 acres, giving a city of quite respectable size as cities went in those days. The character of its buildings is unfortunately matter for guessing. It may be, however, that its houses and shops approximated to the type that is now being uncovered at Ostia (see page 2010), in which case it bore a much closer resemblance to a modern town than did, say, Pompeii.

Although it never attained to the rank of a municipality, there is evidence to suggest that it had some title to be regarded as the capital. It was, in later days at least, the seat of the financial



#### OBJECTS OF NATIVE AND FOREIGN HANDICRAFT FROM BRITISH SOIL

1. Bronze skillet, a sacrificial utensil, with vine scrolls and animals in niello work on the handle; signed by maker, Boduogenus, a native Briton.
2. Stamped bowl of Samian ware (South Gaul) from Newstead Fort; to show the dead hare beneath the eagle's talons the stamp for the live animal is mechanically reversed.
3. Bronze jug with ornamental handle from Bayford.
4. Square glass bottle.
5. Jar ornamented with hunting scenes, probably of native manufacture (Castor ware.)

*From British and London Museums, and Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*

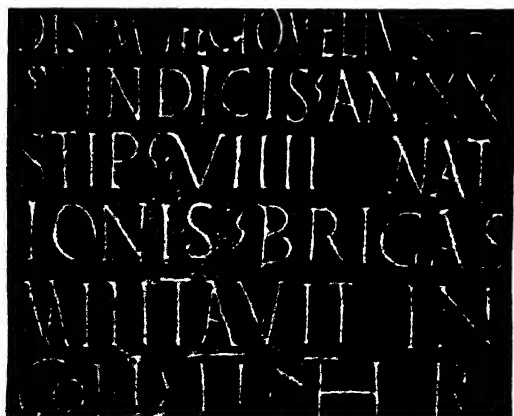


#### HOW ROMAN BRITONS WERE SHOD

The single shoe is from a burial in Kent. The three examples, mounted on modern trees, are from the Wall fort of Bar Hill in Dumbartonshire. The latter include a woman's shoe and a child's, and are thus interesting as relics of the family life of the garrison.

*From British Museum and Macdonald, 'Roman Wall.'*

administration, and it was for a time an imperial mint. When Christianity took root, it speedily became an episcopal see. A fourth-century emperor sought to honour it by calling it 'Augusta,' but the new name failed to catch the popular fancy. For more than a hundred years after the conquest the imperial legate



#### ROMAN TOMBSTONE AND ALTARS FROM THE SCOTTISH WALL

The tombstone on the left, found near the fort of Mumrills, on the Scottish Wall, commemorates a British auxiliary: 'Nectovelus, son of Vindex, a Brigantian by birth; aged 30; served for nine years in the Second Cohort of Thracians.' Next to it are two altars dedicated by M. Cocceius Firmus, a centurion of the Second Legion: that on the left to Mars, Minerva, the Mothers of the Parade Ground, Hercules, Epona and Victory; the second to the Genius of the Land of Britain.

*From Macdonald, 'Roman Wall in Scotland'*

who commanded the troops was also the civil governor, so that the civil officials would gravitate towards the military area, instead of remaining in the south. And one of the few certain things we know about what happened later is that there was much decentralisation. Britain, once an undivided whole but split into two by Septimius Severus, was broken up into four different provinces, and ultimately into five.

Apart, however, from the army, and apart from the officials stationed in the various provincial centres and those entrusted with the management of valuable crown properties like the lead mines, it is easy to believe that the bulk of the immigrants from abroad were concentrated in London. It is true that Colchester, Gloucester, Lincoln and the civil settlement at York were all 'colonies.' But this merely means that the towns already in existence there were deemed suitable by successive emperors for the settlement of time-expired soldiers, to whom grants of land in the neighbourhood would be made, and that they were organized on the lines of Roman municipalities with all the privileges of



Roman citizenship. Verulamium or St. Alban's, though not a colony, was raised to municipal status as early as the middle of the first century.

Whether any other towns were similarly honoured, we do not know. But, if so, they, like the places mentioned, would have their own magistrates—the highest being four in number, grouped either in a single college ('quattuorviri') or in two ('duoviri')—and their local senate, or 'ordo,' the individual members of which were called 'decuriones.' They would have, too, a corporation known as the Augustales, connected somehow with the imperial cult and related, in a way that is not altogether clear, to the six men ('seviri') who were annually appointed to act as priests of the emperor and apparently also as supervisors of the public games. It is significant that the 'seviri Augustales' were usually, if not always, freedmen, a class which, though socially inferior, included many of the richer members of the community. Wealth was the most essential qualification for municipal offices of all kinds, for the holders were expected (and latterly compelled) to make large contributions to public purposes from their private means. Their only reward was the prestige of official dignity.



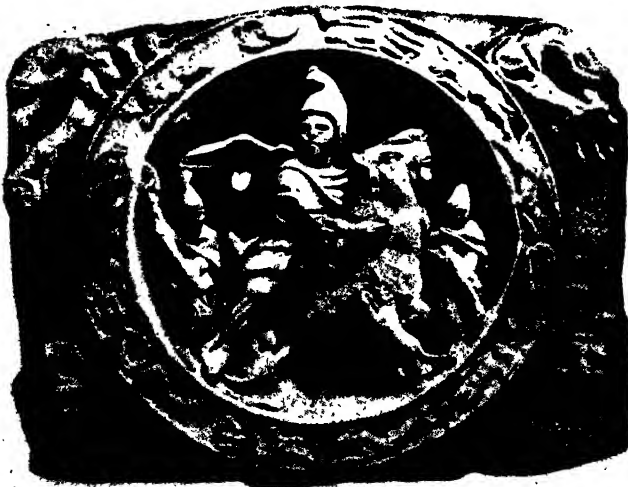
A GAULISH CULT IN BRITAIN

The three 'Mother Goddesses,' introduced to Britain from Gaul, are usually shown seated side by side, with baskets of fruit in their laps. This example is from Cirencester; many similar reliefs have been found in the military area.

*From Journal of Roman Studies*

Bath, with its great temple of Sul Minerva, the goddess of its healing waters, was in Roman days precisely what it is now, a spa much frequented by invalids from different parts of the province. The virtue of its springs was appreciated even in the first century, and we can measure its subsequent popularity by the magnificence of the ruins which it has still to show. More typical of Roman Britain are ten towns distinguished by a peculiar form of name, which indicates that they were cantonal capitals; it consists of two elements, of which the second is a tribal designation in the genitive (or possessive) case. Venta Belgarum, now Winchester, and Calleva Atrebatum, now Silchester, are well known examples. Exeter, Caerwent, Cirencester, Canterbury, Wroxeter, Caister-by-Norwich, Aldborough and perhaps Chichester had names similarly compounded.

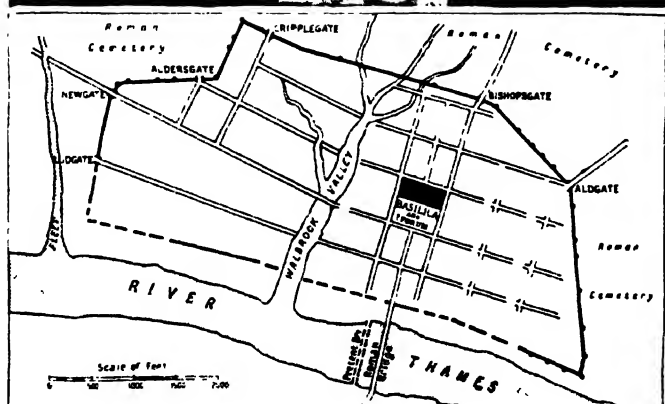
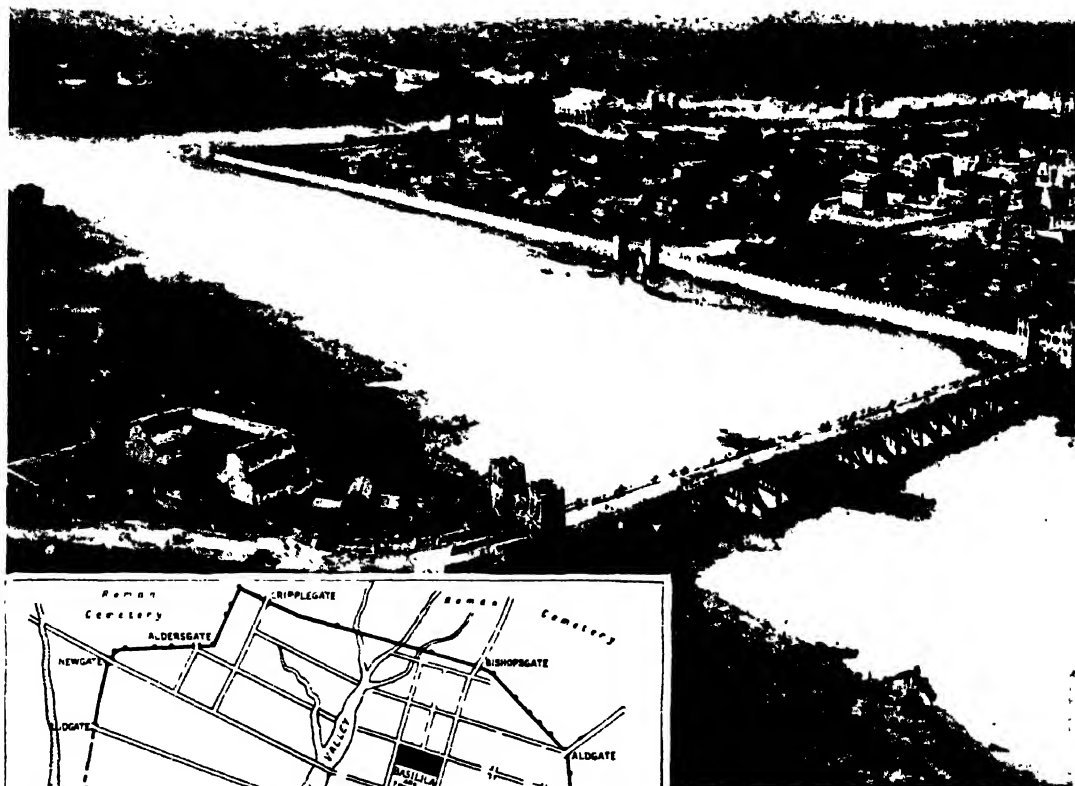
Each seems to have been the meeting-place of a body



MITHRAIC SCULPTURE FROM LONDON

Within a framework adorned with the signs of the zodiac the god is slaying the bull, while the crab, the snake and the dog leap up to share the sacrifice. Outside, in the upper corners, are the chariots of the rising sun and the setting moon. The stone was set up by Ulpian Silvanus, a veteran of the Second Legion, to commemorate his discharge. See also page 2093

*London Museum*



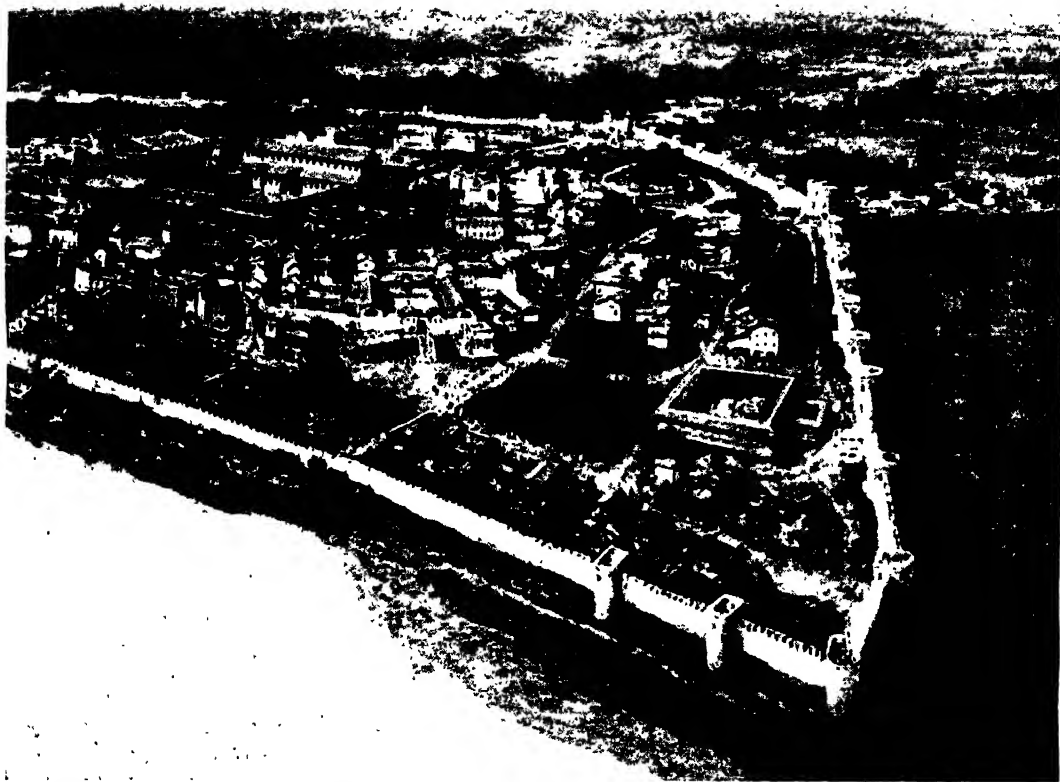
#### ROMAN LONDON—

The map on the left, which contains nothing for which there is not warrant, will show how largely conjectural is this reconstruction of London in the latter days of the Roman occupation

which might be compared to a modern county council—a local senate ('ordo'), charged with administrative and financial responsibility for the surrounding district, and doubtless the lineal descendant of an older native assembly, which had been transmuted by absorption into the Roman system. Less notable were a number of other towns which must have been of much the same general character, except that they were not cantonal capitals and were mostly smaller. The Antonine Itinerary, a road-book of imperial times, contains long lists of names. Often these must denote mere posting stations, but not infrequently extant remains suggest something much more considerable. Cases in point are Magnae, now Kenchester on the Wye, and Lectocetum, now Lichfield.

From the excavations that have taken place at Silchester, Caerwent and Wrox-

eter we can so far reconstruct the appearance of a Romano-British town. It is evident that the chess-board method of planning, originally introduced into Europe from the East by the successors of Alexander the Great, was transplanted to the island by the Romans. That is, the ensemble tended to be square or oblong in shape, while the houses were grouped in rectangular blocks separated by streets. Silchester certainly has an irregular outline, but that may be because it had outgrown its original limits before it was surrounded by walls. Each town had its suite of public buildings—its forum or market-place in the centre, with a basilica or town-hall adjoining, its spacious baths and, outside the walls, its amphitheatre. There were temples also, and at Silchester there was a church (page 2187), which cannot have been at all unique.



#### — MAP AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TRADING CENTRE OF ROMAN BRITAIN

In the foreground (left page) is the timber bridge, somewhat farther downstream than the present London Bridge, with wharves by the bridge gate on the London side. Thence a street runs to the Forum and the Basilica; the site of the latter is known from excavations and the former must have been adjacent. The town walls show the towers that were added to them during the latter days of Roman occupation; from the gates, whose Saxon names are given in the map, run Roman roads, flanked by tombs.

*Plan prepared by Dr. Mortimer Wheeler; reconstruction by Dr. Wheeler and A. Forester in the London Museum*

The shops can be easily identified. As for the houses, they were of two types. The leading feature of the simpler variety was a long corridor or veranda, off which all the rooms opened. In the more elaborate variety corridors or verandas of the same sort, each giving access to a series of rooms, were arranged round three sides of a central courtyard, in the fourth side of which was generally the main entrance. There was no uniformity in size; one of the Silchester examples is so large that it is supposed to have been an hotel. Important rooms were heated from underground chambers, known as hypocausts, a peculiarly Roman device. The plastered walls were brightly coloured, and mosaics of classical pattern covered the floors. The smaller objects, such as personal ornaments and pottery, tell the same tale. Yet amidst all these

indications of foreign influence there are signs that, though the inhabitants were completely Romanised, they had not therefore ceased to be British.

The average standard of comfort would seem to have been reasonably high, and it is natural to ask what the people did for a livelihood. Except in the Midlands, where the conditions for intensive occupation were unfavourable, towns such as have been described were distributed freely over the civil area. What was the economic justification for their existence? Probably the great majority were marketing centres and meeting places for farmers and flockmasters, in some cases perhaps their homes. What then of the rural districts? Norfolk and Suffolk appear never to have recovered from the terrible devastation to which they were subjected in the first century after the suppression



### BUILT TO PROTECT ROMAN LONDON : DESTROYED TO MAKE A RAILWAY

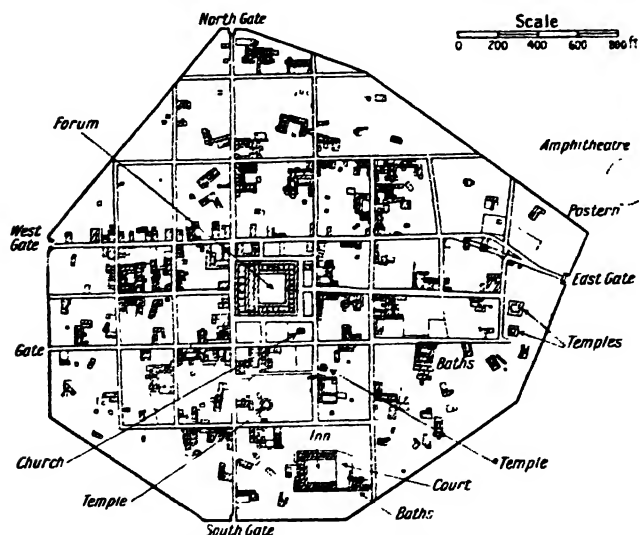
The Roman Wall of London was naturally not suffered to go unrepaired in the ensuing centuries ; but the least altered and most obviously Roman portion yet cleared was destroyed about 1880 in the construction of the line to Southend. The photograph shows the footings, the external chamfered plinth of sandstone, and the alternating bands of ragstone and brick tiles. The Wall was 8 feet thick at the base and originally stood to a height of more than 15 feet.

*Unpublished photo, courtesy of Dr. Philip Norman*

of the revolt of Boudicca or Boadicea. Elsewhere the countryside is thickly studded with remains which are usually described as those of 'Roman villas,' but which really represent the halls and

homesteads of the landed gentry and the farmers of the imperial age. In all of them the miscellaneous finds—pottery, trinkets and the like—are of exactly the same nature as those that have come to light in the Romano-British towns. They show that the dwellers were Romanised Britons.

As in the towns, so in the country, the houses fall into two chief classes, corridor-houses and courtyard-houses. Alike in the simpler and in the more elaborate variety many of the rooms had mosaic floors, some with very ornate designs. Hypocausts were in common use here, too, while at least one set of baths seems to have been almost invariably provided. The size of the 'villa' varied with the rank and means of the owner. The largest of the courtyard type must have been veritable mansions, and we may fancy them to have been the seats of the local aristocracy. The restoration, inset overleaf, of one



### PLAN OF ROMAN SILCHESTER

The excavations at Silchester illustrate admirably the chess-board system of town planning which the Romans introduced into western Europe. The position of the forum in the centre and that of the amphitheatre outside should be noted, as also the amount of space left unoccupied by buildings of any kind.

*From Haverfield, 'Romanisation of Britain'*



such, at Chedworth in Gloucestershire, now the property of the nation, conveys a good impression of its original appearance. The buildings round the inner court, which is laid out as a garden, were the abode of the family. Those flanking the outer court were intended primarily for domestics and farm servants, although in this particular instance there is evidence that some of them were used for fulling.

The villas of the corridor type, again, the more rudimentary of which can have been little better than barns, appear to have been more



**FINE BRITISH SCULPTURE**

Gorgon head from the pediment of the temple of Sul Minerva at Bath, probably dating from the third or second century A.D.

*From Haverfield 'Roman Britain'*

or less substantial farms. In both cases the owners would be engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits, the aristocrats being those who had large capital at their command. Usually these latter would be immigrants, officials in charge of the imperial domains or men who had come to Britain as traders or financiers, and were now putting to a profitable use the fortunes they had acquired in business. Occasionally, however, they might be, like the farmers, native Celts who had the wit and the energy to seize the opportunity which the Roman occupation afforded.

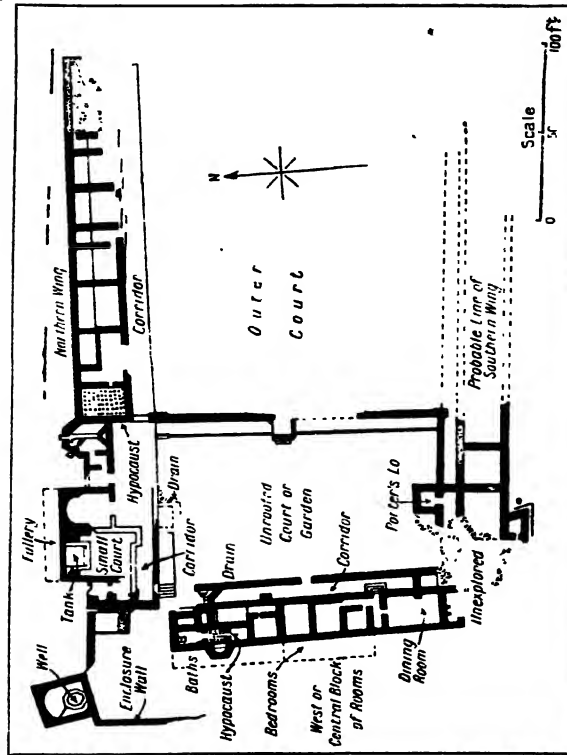


**BRITISH RESOURCES AND ROMAN ENTERPRISE AT BATH**

Though legend says that it was founded by King Bladud in 863 B.C., it was Roman enterprise that made of Aquae Sulis (Bath) a fashionable bathing resort. Above are remains of the Roman bath into which the hot springs discharge. The head at the top of the page is among the most remarkable products of Roman provincial art in western Europe, and reveals a spirit of wild freedom which is neither strictly Greek nor Roman. The unknown element may well be British.

*Photo, Humphrey Joel*





# REMAINS OF A ROMAN VILLA WHOSE OWNER INCREASED HIS REVENUES BY SETTING HIS SLAVES TO DYEING AND FULLING

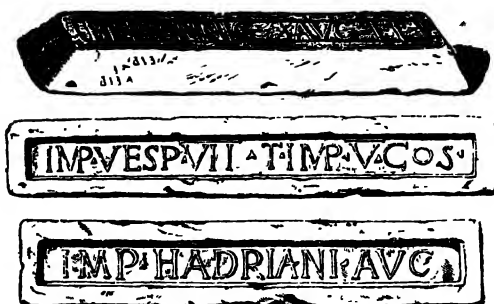
Here is what time has left of Chedworth Villa (see reconstruction in the plate facing this page)—the copings on the walls are of course modern, for the sake of preservation. Reference to the plan will make clear the accompanying illustrations. Top left: The hypocaust in the industrialised north wing: the stone instead of tile pillars show that the floor was intended to bear considerable weight. Bottom left: Some of the living quarters in the west of central block—the dining-room and bath-room contained fine mosaic pavements. Bottom right: Steps leading down into the north-west corner of garden court.

Photos, Humphrey Joel and Moss, Cirencester

For it is certain that the presence of the Roman garrison, with its host of followers, must have given to the development of the resources of the country an impetus corresponding to that which it had given to the growth of London. Wool, hides and corn would be required in large quantities, and all could be produced locally.

The necessary labour would not be difficult to obtain. The frequent traces of native villages—in the valley of the Thames, for example, and in Wiltshire—testify to the presence on the land of a large population, whose level of subsistence was clearly much lower than that of the dwellers in the 'villas.' Some of them tilled their own modest holdings. Others, probably many others, would be available for service as shepherds or farmhands. Others, again, would become workers in the potteries, which were numerous in the New Forest, for instance, and in the valley of the Nen.

Then there were the mines. Iron was smelted here and there, and there are evidences to suggest 'a certain liveliness' in the Cornish tin trade round about A.D. 300. But lead was the chief mineral, and it was valued largely for the silver



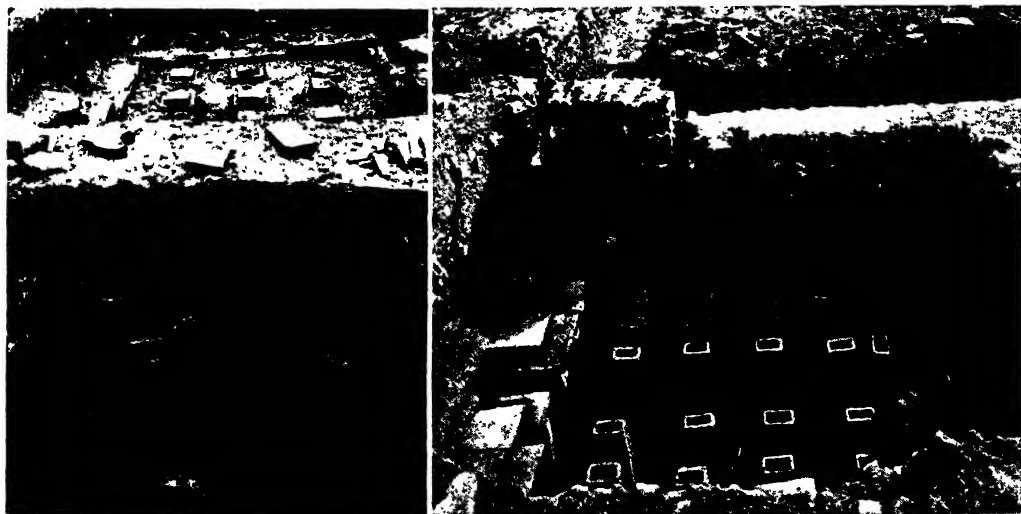
#### STAMPED PIGS OF LEAD

Many pigs are found near Roman lead mines in Britain. Top: from Somerset, dated A.D. 49 (163 lb.). Centre: from Staffordshire, dated A.D. 76 (152 lb.). Bottom: from Shropshire, smelted in the reign of Hadrian (193 lb.).

*British Museum*

that was extracted from it. It was worked in Somerset as early as A.D. 50, and at a later date in Flint, Shropshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire. The names which were stamped upon the pigs show that, as a rule, the lead mines were an imperial property, directly administered. Now and again, however, they appear to have been farmed out to private individuals.

The fact then is that, whether we have regard to the towns or to the country, Britain was tolerably prosperous under the



#### HOW THE ROMANS WITHSTOOD THE RIGOURS OF BRITISH WINTERS

The famous Roman hypocaust system of central heating, by which the hot gases from a furnace were made to pass beneath the floor of a room and up flues in the walls, was actually not so much characteristic of Italy itself (where it was considered effeminate) as of the northern provinces, such as chilly Britain. This villa at Darenth, Kent, preserves its furnace arch (left) and the tile supports of the raised floor (right). A flue pipe in the wall in the background is also apparent.

*Photos, E. C. Youens*

Romans, at least as prosperous as its climate and soil permitted. It could spare corn for export to the Rhine valley, and its wool, perhaps made up into cloaks, even found its way to eastern Europe. The imports, too, must have been considerable in volume. Inscriptions tell us that as early as the first century certain continental traders had learned to describe themselves as 'British merchants,' very much as we to-day speak of 'East Indian' or 'West African' merchants.

It was one of these who in A.D. 237 dedicated an interesting altar found at Bordeaux in 1922. On one side is a personification of the River Garonne, grasping an anchor and leaning on a vase whence water gushes. On the other is a boar. On the front is a mutilated relief which seems to have represented a sacrifice, and beneath the relief is a well cut inscription recording that the altar

DEAE · TVTELE BOVDIG  
M · A/R LVNARIS IIIII  
VIR · AG · COL · BOR · ET  
LND · ROV · BRIT · IN  
ARAM · QVA · VOVR  
AB BORACI · AVEG  
V · S · L · M  
PERPEVO · E · CORNE



MEMORIAL OF A BRITISH MERCHANT

On the front of this altar, set up at Bordeaux in A.D. 237 by a British merchant, there is the inscription quoted above (see text). On the left side, here reproduced, is a reclining figure with an anchor, personifying the river Garonne upon which the dedicator had sailed.

*From Journal of Roman Studies*

was set up 'in honour of the goddess Tutela Boudiga' by one M. Aurelius Lunaris. The dedicator describes himself as 'Sevir Augustalis of the colonies of York and Lincoln in the province of Lower Britain,' and adds that the altar was set up in fulfilment of a vow he had made 'on starting from York.' The office which he held implies that Lunaris was a man of substance, well known in both the cities mentioned, and we may take his thank-offering on the safe completion of his journey as indicative of innumerable such voyages which he and others like him must have made.

That great material advantages attached to the imperial connexion is clear. It would be idle to pretend that there was not a darker side to the picture. Of unauthorised physical violence or grossly illegal extortion, such as too often disgraced the earlier years of the conquest, there was probably little or none. The imperial government understood the importance of the provinces too well to tolerate that, and its wiser heads realized the need of fostering their economic development carefully. Nor ought we to think of a repression of national aspirations. It is unlikely that the Romanised Britons had any consciousness of nationality at all. Rather, they regarded themselves as Romans and were proud to belong to the Empire.

Education had made great strides. A knowledge of reading and writing was common. In the towns Latin was very probably spoken by everybody. It was the language used by the tired workman when he scratched upon a half-finished tile the announcement that he was 'fed up' ('satis'), or when, as in a familiar example from London, he indulged in a grumble at the 'ca' canny' habits of a chum: 'Every day Austalis strolls off for a fortnight's holiday.' It was, too, the language used by lads and lasses in chaffing one another about their love affairs. The significance of these facts is unmistakable. Latin had become the mother tongue.

In the country districts it may well have been otherwise. The dwellers in the 'villas' do indeed seem to have talked Latin. But the dwellers in the villages, the mass of the population, in all likelihood clung to the vernacular. They used Roman pots and imitated various Roman fashions. But it is difficult to believe that their Romanisation was more than skin-deep.

The burdens that the hand of Imperial Rome laid upon the provincials have been summed up by a recent writer as 'compulsory levies of soldiers, compulsory contributions of money and foodstuffs, and compulsory labour.' Without doubt the Britons had to pay various imposts and to render various services, in order to ensure that the central government should be maintained in full vigour. Even in normal circumstances those who lived along the great trunk-roads that led to the Welsh and Scottish borders must often have been subjected to vexatious requisitions for the transport of army supplies. In times of special stress the evil would be seriously aggravated. On the whole, however, the island escaped more lightly than did most of the other provinces. It was when civil war broke out that the pressure was most grievous, and Britain had the rare good fortune never to be chosen



**DEFENDING A ROMAN PORT**

At Richborough, the Roman Rutupiae, once the principal port of entry to Britain and now again fulfilling its ancient function, there can still be seen the massive walls of the fort that the Romans built to guard it in the fourth century.

*Photo, Amos, Dover*



**BACCHUS AT HOME IN LONDON**

In the towns and the wealthier villas all the amenities of Italian life were to be found. This mosaic pavement came to light in Leadenhall Street in 1803; note that the design is classical—Bacchus riding on a panther.

*British Museum*

as a battle-ground by rival aspirants to the purple. If a balance be struck, it will be found that its people had no cause to regret their attachment to the Empire. Certainly the whips of Roman rule were as nought compared to the scorpions with which the outer world of barbarism was presently to chastise them.

Before the fourth century opened the province was already menaced by barbarian invasion. It came from three sides, On the north and west were the Picts and Scots, the latter of whom still had their main base in Ireland. As the years passed, these raiders grew more and more aggressive, sometimes swooping down from beyond the Wall of Hadrian, sometimes descending on the Welsh or English littoral. The climax was reached in A.D. 367, when the invading hordes broke through the frontier defences and swept

over the Romanised area, spreading ruin and slaughter wherever they went. Roman Britain never fully recovered from the effects of this disaster. All the while the roving galleys of Saxon pirates, forerunners of the immigrant bands who were ultimately to give to the greater part of the island another language and another name, were ravaging the eastern sea-board with ever-increasing frequency and carrying fire and sword farther and farther inland.

In the *Notitia Dignitatum*, an army list of the late Empire, the coast from the Wash to Southampton Water has become part of the military area. It is called 'the Saxon Shore' and is controlled by an officer with the rank of 'Count.' The nine or ten forts in which the troops under his command were stationed date from the close of the third century. They are quite unlike the *castella* built in earlier days for the accommodation of auxiliary regiments on the frontier, being larger and having high walls with numerous bastions. Some time after the middle of the fourth century the forts of the Saxon Shore were supplemented by a series of tall towers of stone, erected as look-out

posts on the top of the Yorkshire cliffs. The meaning of such precautions is not to be mistaken. And we can follow the shadow of the eclipse within the civil area, too. We can see the various inland towns, originally undefended, surrounding themselves with walls. Presently the walls have to be strengthened and the entrances made narrower. The fortification of isolated villas is a no less significant proof of the growing peril to life and property. By the last quarter of the fourth century most of the villas seem to have been abandoned or destroyed. Simultaneously the cities were decaying.

It is impossible to say exactly when Britain ceased to be part of the Empire. The traditional date of A.D. 410 may be as near the truth as we shall ever get. What is certain is that there was no sudden snapping of the link. When the last Roman soldier had quitted the island, when there were no Roman officials left to take their orders from the emperor, the Britons still cherished the memory of a vanished past. The recollection may, indeed, have lasted as long as Romano-British civilization itself.



**SIGNIFICANT LAST REPAIRS TO THE TOWN WALL OF CAERWENT**

The Romano-British town of Caerwent was founded in the latter part of the first century, and was then surrounded by an earthen rampart. In the second century the rampart was replaced by a stone wall, parts of which are still standing to a height of 18 or 20 feet. Towards the middle of the fourth century—ominous sign of the multiplying barbarian attacks—the wall was strengthened by the addition of polygonal bastions, one of which is seen in the illustration.

*Photo, B. C. Clayton*

# ROME AS THE WORLD'S LAW-GIVER

How a Succession of Brilliant Jurists modified  
the Law of a City State to suit an Empire

By F. de ZULUETA D.C.L.

Regius Professor of Civil Law and Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford; Author of  
The Liber Pauperum of Vacarius

**T**HE subject of this study is not Roman law in the widest sense, but that part of it which is called 'private'; that is, the part which regulates the relations, family and commercial, between man and man. Roman constitutional and administrative law are best treated in connexion with political history (see Chapters 55 and 62) and have had a very different fate from Roman private law in post-Roman history.

The history of the private law falls into two great periods divided by the death of Justinian (emperor at Constantinople A.D. 527-65). The first is one of elaboration, culminating in the great synthesis made by Justinian, and known as the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, or Code of Civil Law. Between the date of the Twelve Tables (c. 451-450 B.C.), when our information begins to be historical, and the death of Justinian, who gave to Roman law the form under which it has chiefly influenced the modern world, the law of a rude peasant city state became that of a civilized empire.

The history of Roman law does not end with Justinian; it has a long epilogue in the Byzantine Empire, which we must simply neglect, and it has a unique second volume in western Europe, which gives it a living interest for us.

To be strictly accurate, the history of the after-importance of Roman law in the West begins a little before the death of Justinian, with the fall of the Western Empire in the fifth century. The effect of this catastrophe upon Roman law was something like its effect on Roman institutions generally. It was a rude shock, resulting in some places, notably in England, in the almost complete destruction of these institutions; but generally they underwent various degrees of debasement

and deformation. In most countries there was a mingling of Roman and barbarian elements, which occurred the more naturally because the barbarian conquerors had themselves already been partly Romanised by centuries of contact with the higher civilization and, frequently, by previous settlement within the Empire and service in the Roman army. Most important of all, the Christian Church survived and the Church was Latin. At first the Roman and barbarian laws existed side by side, and, even when a common law for each country had been reached, Roman law of a sort continued as a separate system in most Western countries, though not in England, right through the Dark Ages.

The Roman law which thus survived was naturally that of the pre-Justinian period, and was, moreover, a debased form of it. Even before the

Effect of the  
Fall of the Empire

break-up of the Western Empire the Roman legal tradition had suffered greatly in the long convulsions of the times, and it was as inevitable that, in the absence of legal science that characterised the Dark Ages, Roman law should become barbarised as that the barbarian systems themselves should gradually be affected by an infiltration of Roman ideas.

The way was thus clear for a development of a Romance law parallel to the development of Romance races and tongues. But just as Latin has been not merely an ultimate source whence contributions have been carried to many modern languages by a continuous tradition of popular usage, but also a well from which new vocabulary has constantly been drawn by the learned study of the classical language, even so the Roman element

in Western law is not merely the result of a survival in practice, but comes largely from the revival of the learned study of the ancient law in its pure state.

This revival dates, for practical purposes, from the discovery by the Bolognese school at the end of the eleventh century of Justinian's *Corpus Juris Civilis*. The tradition of law bequeathed by the classical age had survived in the Eastern Empire through the fourth and fifth centuries A.D.; and what Justinian had done in the sixth century was to throw it into an accessible form

**Rediscovery of Justinian's Code** of manageable size and unquestionable authority.

Moreover, he had brought the substance of the law up to date by carrying to its final term the process of denationalising Roman law, a process which had been in progress ever since Rome had begun to acquire a foreign empire, and by dealing with the many problems created by the emergence of the Church from the catacombs. As codified by Justinian, Roman law was better adapted to the needs of the later Middle Ages than was any tradition of pre-Justinian Roman law that may have survived the Dark Ages in the West.

The Bolognese revival spread to all the universities of the West, and from the universities passed gradually to the law-courts, from study to practice. We will illustrate what happened by taking two extreme cases, Germany and England.

In Germany Roman law became, in the course of the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, the common law of the country, and remained in that position until the promulgation of the German Civil Code in 1900. Of course, it was not the sole law. It could be displaced in a given area by local statute and custom. It was thus a subsidiary law, but it was that which *prima facie* held good, and formed the sub-structure of the whole; its general principles were predominant throughout the entire legal system. But bear in mind that the imported law was not pure Roman law, but the version of it which came from the Italian universities. This modernised version omitted large parts of Justinian's law as 'not read,' that is to say, as inapplicable.

At the other extreme is England, where no more than in Germany can we say that any Roman law survived from the days when Britain was a Roman province. Though in Anglo-Saxon and early Norman days there are slight traces of a penetration of Roman ideas, for which the influence of the Church is mainly responsible, Roman influence on English law really begins after the rise of the Bolognese school, in the second half of the twelfth century, and it continues markedly till about the end of the thirteenth. This influence can be seen at its height in the fundamental treatise of Bracton (c. 1250). But, though English law was in some respects permanently affected by it, the early establishment of a strong central national government, and the continuity of the tradition and practice of the royal courts, put anything resembling the German 'reception' of Roman law outside the field of practical possibilities.

English law owes much to the Roman, not merely because of its inoculation with Roman principles in the thirteenth century, but because throughout the succeeding centuries the learned study of Roman law and the example of adjacent countries has made Roman law a constant influence. A simple illustration is the Latin origin of most of the chief British legal terms. But substantially the basis of English common law is Teutonic custom. Outside the common law, however, there has been some reception of Roman law by special English jurisdictions, sometimes directly, as in the case of the courts of admiralty, sometimes indirectly, through the canon law, as in the case of the formerly ecclesiastical courts of probate and divorce. Moreover, that very essential supplement of the common law known as equity is deeply indebted to canon, and thus, as we shall see, to Roman law.

In general it may be said that the causes everywhere predisposing men in favour of Roman law were the sheer intellectual attraction of this great product of antiquity, its superiority for the purposes of the rapidly developing commerce and town life of the later Middle Ages, and, underlying all, the feeling that



the Roman Empire had in a sense never ceased to be, and that to some extent Roman law was still authoritative.

Nowhere were the continuity and unity of Christendom more patent than in the Church. The Church was universal and had one universal law, so that a man was subject not merely to the secular law of his country, but to the canon law. There were matters over which the ecclesiastical courts had an incontestable jurisdiction, notably marriage; there were others in which their jurisdiction was contestable—for example, wills and contracts.

Now courts must have law; the Church had always had laws, but the development of canon law as a scientific body of rules dates from the twelfth century and originates, like the revival of Roman law, from Bologna. The sources of the canon law were various; it would be a mistake to classify them as entirely or mainly Roman: the Bible, the Fathers and Teutonic customary law must not be overlooked. But where it dealt with such matters as wills, contracts, possession and so forth, in short with what are now matters of private civil law, the canon law borrowed freely from Justinian. We have referred

**The Sources of Canon Law** to the advances on the law of Justinian made by the Italian jurists; in this development the canonists showed themselves less traditional and more constructive than the civilians, and some of the most notable points in which modern European law has passed to a stage beyond that of Justinian's code are an inheritance from the medieval canon law.

The Reformation and the Renaissance proved in the long run unfavourable to Roman law. The Reformation broke the unity of Christendom, which had been a reality, and thereby destroyed the very basis of Roman and canon law conceived of as universally binding. Law came to be regarded as something primarily national, and the belief that Roman law was the type from which national systems were divagations waned. Similarly, it was all very well for the Renaissance scholars to exalt the Roman jurisprudence of the classical age (the second and third centuries A.D.), and to attempt to interpret

Roman law by its historical setting. So read the Roman texts ceased to be applicable to contemporary conditions, and the medieval advances were abandoned as barbarous misinterpretations.

Under the action of the forces liberated by the Reformation and the Renaissance the combinations of local custom and statute with Italianised Roman law which formed the medieval systems were gradually displaced by national codes, based in certain parts, notably the law of contract, on medieval Roman law, but containing other elements, which in a general way may

be termed Germanic, **Gradual development of national codes** though this label hides the fact that much

of the modern law must be assigned to the speculations of modern jurists and to the experience of modern practitioners, working on the novel material presented by our modern civilization.

Because the medieval resurrection of Roman law is a very familiar fact, one is apt to overlook its uniqueness and significance. It amounts to this, that Roman law, as a constituent element in our modern civilization, ranks at least equal to Greek philosophy, and below only Christianity itself. Now, the influence of Greek philosophy is a remarkable thing, but is not in itself a paradox. What is true philosophy must always and everywhere be true, and there is nothing strange in our having appropriated the truths discovered long ago by Plato and Aristotle. But what is good law at one time or place is not necessarily good at others. Thus the fact that for several centuries Roman law obtained all over an empire embracing widely different races and conditions might be regarded as an historical accident.

But it is impossible to give a similar explanation of the fact that Roman law was deliberately revived long after the Roman power had disappeared. This absolutely unique phenomenon can only have been due to the intrinsic qualities of the law, and is the best testimony to the achievement of the Roman jurists.

What is thereby suggested is that Roman law possesses an absolute value, independent of the accidents of political



power: in other words, that it contains a regulation of social relations which is in accord with the permanent needs of human nature. It is commonly held that no particular legal system can possess this universal character, because there is nothing permanent in human nature. But this is a very crude view. If there is a science of comparative law, we are bound to assume at least that human nature, within the limits of historical past and predictable future, is a constant, which under similar conditions will arrive at very similar legal results.

In the field of comparative law the Roman system is evidently an outstanding type; but viewed in

**Views on the value of Roman Law.** the light of the philosophy of history it ac-

quires a deeper significance. To those whose philosophy consists in the assumption of progress, Roman legal history will appear as a record of many a notable step towards the destined perfection, and the medieval revival of Roman law as a short-cut which spared western Europe the repetition of an evolution already realized. But this view, though interesting, rests on a very questionable hypothesis and relegates Roman law definitely to the past.

A second possible view emerges from a consideration of the intimate historical connexion of Roman law with Christianity. Anyone who holds that the manifestation of our Saviour is the central fact in history must regard the conditions in which that event occurred as providentially chosen. The Incarnation took place in the Roman Empire; anywhere else the preaching of the Gospel and the formation of Christendom would, so far as can be seen, have been impossible. Thus Christendom took shape in a society expressing its ideas of justice in terms of Roman law. And the fact that, after a lapse of centuries, society, become Christian though lower in material civilization, reverted once more to Roman law as the pattern regulation of human affairs gains a new significance. It raises the question whether, after all, Roman law has not an absolute value for all time.

The Christian view is that mankind received from its Creator a common

human nature, governed by an immutable moral law from which society is continually departing, and to which it is continually striving to return. It might be, of course, that Roman law was an evil, and that revelation was sent to help us to overcome it, but the revival of Roman law in the Middle Ages strongly suggests the contrary: namely, that Roman law in its main lines is true to natural law.

It would be a caricature of this view to make it mean that Roman law is the natural law, with consequent unconditional validity for all times and places. It clearly contains much that is simply accidental, much that is plainly wrong, and it has nothing to say on a number of problems which have arisen in our more complex civilization. But the presumption remains strong that its governing ideas are consonant with the natural law which revelation reinforced.

An account of how Roman law, which in its origin was as archaic and narrowly national a system as can well be conceived, acquired by centuries of elaboration this universal quality would be too specialised for the purposes of this study. Here we must rather attempt to define the directing idea in this long process, an idea which has contributed more than any other to the civilization of law.

**Directing idea behind the process**

That idea is expressed by the famous term *Jus Gentium*, which means Law of the World. Rome was originally one of many states, each governed by a law intended for, and considered applicable to, none but its own citizens. That is why the Romans called their own law the law of citizens ('*jus civile*'). But, when states are small, commerce soon oversteps state boundaries, so that the problems of how to regulate the relations between and with foreign traders arose early. What more natural solution of it than to discover and enforce the ideas of justice common to the various systems of civil law because of the substantial identity of human nature everywhere?

The Greeks of the Hellenistic age seem to have held this idea, but they did not look outside the circle of Hellenistic states; it was the Romans who grasped

the conception in its entirety and gave it full practical effect without any restriction of nationality. It was in harmony with their political idea of founding a world state and of removing artificial barriers, and it was in harmony with and reinforced by the Greek philosophical conception of natural law ('*jus naturale*').

The conscious pursuit of an ideal end such as this is of course a late development. The early steps are taken under pressure of practical needs. Thus the *Jus Gentium* seems to have originated as a law which could be applied by Roman magistrates to foreigners. Some such measure was necessary in the second to third centuries B.C., when, as a result of defeating Carthage, Rome took the lead in the Mediterranean world, became an international centre and was brought into intimate contact with Greek civilization.

But the *Jus Gentium* did not long remain the monopoly of foreign litigants. It passed into the law between citizens, where it became the great progressive force. The whole subsequent history of

Roman law may in fact be described as the gradual supersession of the archaic national law by the *Jus Gentium*. As we have suggested above, however, the process by which this was achieved constitutes a highly technical subject of interest to few but specialist students of legal history. Here it will be sufficient to record that, outside the family law, the victory of the *Jus Gentium* was substantially complete by the beginning of the third century A.D., when, by the extension of Roman citizenship to all free inhabitants of the Empire, the law as between citizens became the law for all.

But though the substantial law had been denationalised, its form was still thoroughly Roman, and as such unsuitable for universal application. The crux of the matter was that the archaic civil law had never been repealed; it was still in force, but was supplemented and superseded in countless details by praetorian law, that is by the practice of the Roman magistrates. To the Englishman, accustomed to the existence of a common law tempered and supplemented by equity or chancellor's law, this state of affairs is readily

understandable, but to the Greeks and the rest of the non-Latin Roman world it must have seemed foolishness.

What was chiefly needed, then, was that the praetorian reforms should become formally civil law, but just when by the extension of the citizenship the need became most urgent, the Roman state entered upon a long period of crisis, during which legal science underwent an eclipse. It was not until the fifth century that jurisprudence enjoyed a certain revival in the Eastern half of the now divided Empire, so that in the sixth, after the Western half had

been lost, Justinian was able to face the problem systematically. It cannot be said that the solution of it contained in his *Corpus Juris* is entirely satisfactory. He wished to restore the glories of the jurisprudence of the early Empire, but was only able to do so by utilising the literature of that period.

Thus the largest part of his codification is a mosaic of classical texts, from which, freely altered though they were, the historic distinction between civil and praetorian law could not be eradicated. In great measure Justinian did put an end to the technical survival of the old law and frankly adopted as the new civil law the *Jus Gentium* of praetorian law. So far his work was substantially Roman, not Byzantine. But there is a Byzantine contribution to it. The piecemeal reforms of the emperors from the fourth to the sixth century bore fruit in a denationalisation of the family law which the praetorian reforms had left almost untouched, and in business transactions the Eastern formality of writing supplanted the old Roman forms. Other important advances, as in the law of marriage, are clearly attributable to Christianity.

The *Jus Gentium* was thus a master idea, but in legal development it is not enough to have brilliant ideas and exalted ideals. Nor, on the other hand, does it suffice to have absorbed a technical tradition. It is necessary so to manipulate the tradition as to make it receptive of progressive ideas. Legislation is sometimes inevitable, but the main path of development lies in the adaptation of existing law by free and

Revival of the  
early jurisprudence

equitable administration. That is how the best parts of English common law and equity have been fashioned, and that is how substantially the whole of the *Jus Gentium* was evolved. The only difference is that in the English system the leading part has fallen to a bench of permanent judges, whereas in the Roman it fell to a select band of practising lawyers or jurists, whose pronouncements were recognized as authoritative by public opinion and later by the emperors.

In the *Jus Gentium* the test of law is what a man of common sense and good faith would deem to be right. If the existing civil law enforces claims which offend that test, somehow a practical means of avoiding them must be found. If it fails to enforce a clear claim of good faith, somehow a means of enforcing that claim must be found. Often a skilful reinterpretation of traditional material will suffice; but, where this failed, Roman law contained technical means whereby novel remedies and defences could be introduced, tested in practice, and dropped or permanently adopted according to their practical success. Hence the Romans defined law as the art of what is good and fair, and jurisprudence as the knowledge of what is just and unjust. For them the business of the jurist was constantly to improve the law by bringing it into accord with ethical standards.

This conception of law is our great debt to the Romans. They thought of it not as an inert mass of traditional rules, a kind of procrustean bed to which human interests must be fitted, nor again as something simply laid down from on high, but as a progressive and adaptable thing, to be reasoned about and steadily perfected by constant touch with human needs. On the other hand their solutions are never those of a vague subjective equity. There was a certain sober and stable Roman conception of social justice and honour which the law could reasonably aspire to realize without becoming the sport of individual whims. It was never said of praetorian law, as it was caustically said of English equity, that it varied with the length of the magis-

trate's foot. The Romans combined elasticity with certainty, progress with an intensely conservative professional tradition. The 'prudentes', or jurists, were moralists, but they remained lawyers.

The picturesque details of primitive Roman law would be out of place in a study of Rome as the world's law-giver, because Roman law became the law of the 'civilized world' precisely by shedding its archaic features. But an attempt must be made to compare the fundamental features of the late Roman and modern European legal systems.

The natural basis of society is the family under the headship of the father. In the earliest period Rome was a federation of clans, themselves formed by agglomeration of families. The prevention of private wars between the clans was the earliest function of the state. At a later stage the rule of the state, law in fact, penetrated inside the clan and arbitrated between families; but it was long before law forced its way inside the family.

For many centuries the family was under the unrestricted rule of the father, a system which was given legal expression in the terms of the famous '*patria potestas*' (the power of the father). According to law, the father had absolute authority over his children: he could put them to death, sell them into slavery or bondage, appropriate all their earnings and ac-

**Tyranny of the  
'Patria Potestas'**

quisitions, turn them out of the family without a penny, reduce their rights by adopting outsiders, disinherit them absolutely, prevent their marrying. If the word '*pater*' (father) is etymologically a baby-word like *pappa*, the Roman *paterfamilias* ('father' in the sense of 'head of a family') evokes a very different picture. But even in the early period there were strong limitations imposed by custom and morality, reinforced by the discipline of the censors. For an extreme exercise of his powers a father had to have recourse to the family council.

Gradually the law penetrated into the family, limiting the paternal power, and consecrating the individual rights of the subordinate members. Thus by the time of Justinian, and indeed long before, the

complete personal and economic dependence of children was greatly reduced. But it remained very extensive, and it still lasted as long as the father lived. Thus a man of fifty still required his father's consent in order to marry; though the magistrate could grant a dispensation if consent was unreasonably withheld.

Again, in spite of the considerable restrictions set upon the obligatory acquisition of property for the father by children, reading between the lines one is led to think that the economic dependence of a son was still, even under Justinian, a serious matter. It may be fair enough that up to a certain age a child should earn for the family, and the real objection to this manifestation of the 'patria potestas,' as modified in the latest law, is that it still lasted for the father's life. In this respect at least the Roman family system retained to the end a strongly national colour. On the other hand it does clearly recognize the essential natural headship of the father, which, deferring to sentimentality and feminism, our modern law has dangerously diminished.

To a woman, the patriarchal system was at first particularly severe, because on her father's death she did not become legally independent, but would either be in her husband's power or would fall under the tutorship of her nearest male relatives; and this tutorship was in early days not far removed from 'patria potestas.' But in the latest law we find that

#### Disappearance of sex disabilities

sex disabilities have disappeared. If unmarried,

women became on their father's death as free as men. If married, they were no longer in their husband's power, the forms of marriage which produced this result having fallen out of use by the time of the early Empire. The classical law established that marriage was made by consent, the principle which is the basis of the Christian sacrament. This was one of the greatest constructions of Roman jurisprudence, but by an unfortunate analogy it was inferred that equally marriage could be terminated by withdrawal of consent and consequently by the mere repudiation of either party. Never has divorce been so free from re-

strictions both in theory and practice. The subject has become so controversial in modern times that we will only observe that the Roman doctrine is the very antithesis of the Christian.

Closely connected with family law is that of inheritance. In the case of an unjust will, the law of Justinian guaranteed children and certain other relatives a definite fraction of what would have been theirs on intestacy. This is a principle accepted by all modern law except English. Only in English law can a father capriciously leave the whole of his fortune to strangers. None the less the English will is in the direct line of descent from the Roman. Moreover the law of intestate succession, as rationalised by Justinian, is substantially identical with modern law.

The Roman social system, like the English, was based on an unequivocal recognition of private property, but any comparison

is rendered difficult by the survival of some feudal elements in English land law, and by the doctrine of trusts, that greatest constructive achievement of native English jurisprudence, which has no counterpart in Roman law. But one contrast needs to be mentioned.

The Romans applied the conception of property to human beings. Slavery and divorce are the two great blots on Roman law, and it was only by the patient effort of centuries that Christianity was able to remove them. Slavery is a term of many shades of meaning; the Roman conceived it in the most objectionable sense. A man might own another as he owned his ox; he was then at liberty to exploit him to the uttermost and abandon him when infirm; his power of alienation was unfettered, so that he could break up his marriage and family. There were certain assuagements in later Roman law, but the total abolition of slavery by our civilization represents the unanimous verdict of Christianity.

The law of contract is the part of modern European law which is most clearly and directly descended from the Roman. It is now universally recognized that a man is bound by his business agree-

#### Property in human beings

ments. The law may sometimes require formalities, whose object is to ensure that there shall be no equivocation nor evasion, and the general formality required is writing. But these principles, so obvious to us, are the result of centuries of Roman development. In fact, in the simple form in which we have stated them they represent not pure Roman law, but the final perfection of Roman law by the medieval civilians and canonists.

Early Roman law recognized that a man might bind himself to another by certain solemn forms. These forms normally ensured agreement, but it was the

**Binding nature of** not agreement. It was  
**verbal contract** even laid down that agreement as such did not

bind. Amongst such early forms was one of great simplicity, consisting of an oath taken by question and answer. The requirement of a solemn word (*spondeo*—‘I pledge myself’—was the generally accepted word) was gradually dropped, and eventually all that was necessary was that the promisor should answer the spoken question of the promisee by an unconditional affirmative. Moreover, the obligation thereby created had been one of strict law. A man was simply bound to do what he had thus promised, regardless of his having been influenced by mistake, fraud or fear. But here the praetor intervened, and by means of equitable pleas nullified the promise on proof of these facts.

Some relics of the old verbal solemnity survived, thus the parties had still to be present together, and the contract could not be made by exchange of letters, but by the end of the second century A.D. it would have been but a short step to substitute the principle that agreement as such was binding. But neither the late classical jurists nor Justinian took it.

Parallel with this development runs another, consisting in the exemption of certain of the most important contracts from the rule of form. Sale, hire, partnership and mandate could be formed by simple consent, and others were added. These new contracts had the advantage of taking the whole transaction into account: the rights and duties of both parties came under review and were settled by the rules

of good faith. And there was another class of contracts formed for the most part by the physical transfer of some object—loans, deposit, pawn, etc.—to which the rule of bilaterality and good faith applied. The implications of good faith casuistically worked out by classical jurists are the basis of modern jurisprudence.

In the matter of torts, as English law calls civil wrongs, modern European law has similarly appropriated and perfected the results of centuries of Roman evolution. Their system originated as one of private vengeance, and developed into one of money penalties payable to the injured party in place of vengeance. This penal idea was never wholly extirpated: to the end Roman law is struggling, not with entire success, to substitute the modern principle of compensation. Yet, in spite of this defect, it may be questioned whether the Roman law of offences against the person, for example, is not more delicately adjusted to natural feelings than the modern English law with regard to offences against honour. A Roman citizen could sue for conduct or words insulting his wife or family, and an insult to a man after his death could, indeed must, be vindicated by his representatives.

Our last debt to the Romans is in the matter of legal process. We are accustomed to think of the state as the fountain of justice; the law is supreme, and the full power of the state is at our disposal for the enforcement of our private rights. We forget that here, as elsewhere, we have simply appropriated the results of the Roman evolution. The history of Roman procedure shows with how great difficulty the idea that justice in private disputes is a function of the state comes to be accepted. In the latest Roman law the idea was carried even too far, and justice became too bureaucratic. The judge was now a civil servant and was unassisted by the lay juror who had played so prominent a part in the days of political freedom. The procedure of Justinian is the parent of modern continental procedure, from which English law departs so happily in its method of recruitment of the judicial bench, and, with more doubtful success, in its retention of the civil jury.

**Evolution of  
legal procedure**

# ALEXANDRINE LITERATURE AND LEARNING

How the Heritage of Hellenism was studied in the Schools of Alexandria under the Ptolemies and the Romans

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**L**EARNING, in the sense of an acquaintance with the literary and scientific heritage of the past, obviously cannot exist till a body of literature and science has come into existence to be bequeathed to posterity. The great creative age of the ancient Greeks ended with Alexander the Great, but by that time so important a body of literature and science had been formed that the days of Alexander could be followed by an age of learning. There is nothing impossible in the coexistence of learning and new creative production. The great age of Greek creation in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. was also to some extent an age of learning: there was already a literary heritage in Homer, the other epics and the lyric poets (see Chapter 43), and a heritage of rudimentary science in the writings of the Ionic philosophers (see Chapters 47 and 48), which it took time for a man to master; and it was a matter of pride when a man's memory was richly stored.

In the age of learning after Alexander fresh literary creation did not altogether cease: different sciences made notable advances; yet it remains true that in the days before Alexander the original literary production is more prominent than the learning, and in the age after Alexander the converse is found. Why the creative power of the Greek genius flagged in the days after Hellenism had conquered most of the known world is one of the most obscure, and the most interesting, problems of human history.

Learning, so far as it does not consist in the committing to memory of a merely oral tradition, presupposes books—

libraries. Books had been extremely rare possessions in the Greek world before the introduction of the papyrus material from Egypt towards the end of the seventh century B.C. Before that the Greeks had written on prepared skins ('diphtherai'), as the Asiatics did, or on wooden tablets or other materials that came to hand. In ancient Egypt there were extensive swamps covered with a tall-growing reed called by modern botanists the *Cyperus papyrus*, now extinct in Egypt though still found on the Upper Nile. Perhaps three thousand or more years before Christ some Egyptian thought of sticking the fibres of this reed side by side, and so making sheets of a sort of paper, for writing on; then long strips of this substance were made on which an extensive literary work could be written in successive parallel columns, and which, rolled up together, formed a portable book. Papyrus books of this kind were in use in Egypt many centuries before the Greeks were familiar with them.

In the seventh century the Egyptian papyrus stuff, single sheets and long rolls of it, began to be exported to the Greek world. It gave the Greeks a more convenient writing material than they had ever had before, and Greek books began to multiply. The papyrus stuff itself the Greeks called 'chartēs'—probably from some Egyptian word—and to a roll of it, a papyrus book, they gave the same name as that given by them to the papyrus plant itself, 'byblos,' later written 'biblos' (whence the word 'Bible'). From the Greek 'chartēs' came the Latin 'charta,' signifying

Introduction of  
papyrus material



#### PAPER, PENS AND INK OF LONG AGO

For writing on papyrus, manufactured chiefly at Alexandria, and on parchment, Greek and Roman scribes used pens of reed or bronze, cut to a point and slit; and as ink the Romans used the sepia secreted by the cuttle fish. The inkpot (bottom) of blue faience was found at Oxyrhynchus and is of Roman date.

*British Museum*

papyrus paper, whence the Italians still call paper 'carta,' transferring the old name quite naturally to another kind of stuff which serves the same purpose. But why anybody in the Middle Ages began to call the new rag paper introduced from the East 'papyrus,' whence the French 'papier,' and the English 'paper,' nobody seems to know. The ancient Greeks knew the word 'papyrus' as a name of the plant, but they never called the paper made from it 'papyrus.'

By the fifth century B.C. the literary heritage of Greece from Homer onwards had all come to be engrossed in quantities of papyrus rolls which circulated from hand to hand or were sold in the markets. In 407 B.C. a blank papyrus roll cost at Athens 1 drachma 2 obols (equivalent to about 3 shillings in purchasing power).

There were now men whose ambition it was to form a library ('bibliothēkē,' a place for putting 'biblia,' papyrus rolls). Euripides is said to have possessed an unusually large collection of papyrus rolls for his day. Plato in the fourth

century, when he founded in the Academy a school for philosophical research, fitted it out with a library. A still greater one was founded by Aristotle for his school. But, of course, if a despot turned his desires in the direction of making a library, his resources gave him an advantage over a private individual.

When after Alexander's death (323 B.C.) one of his Macedonian marshals, Ptolemy son of Lagus, made himself king of Egypt, a man of Greek culture became master of the country which supplied papyrus paper to the rest of the world. Under the successors of Ptolemy, who all bore the name of the founder of the line, the manufacture of papyrus paper in Egypt was probably a monopoly of the crown, so that the substance required all over the sphere of Greek culture for the making of books could be procured

only from the workshops of the Greek king of Egypt. Ptolemy, as the richest man of the world then known, had an advantage over everyone else in buying books already existing all over the Mediterranean lands; and, besides that, as controlling the world's paper supply, he was in the best position for having copies of the old books made, or for having new books put into circulation. When he conceived the ambition of forming in Alexandria the greatest library of the world, no one could compete with him.

#### The Ptolemies as patrons of Literature

Later, when the Greek kings of Pergamum wished to create a rival library, they tried to break Egypt's monopoly in paper by the manufacture of a finer kind of prepared skin, called 'pergamēnē' (whence our word 'parchment'; the general Greek name for skin prepared for writing on was, as has been said, 'diphthera,' the Latin 'membrana'). But papyrus paper held its own as the material for books in the Graeco-Roman world till Christian times.



The great library of Alexandria was connected with an institution, founded probably by the first Ptolemy, called the Museum. We must dismiss from our minds the modern associations of the word 'museum.' In Greek 'mousaion' meant a temple of the Muses—the goddesses of music and poetry and literature generally. All associations which men formed in the Greek world adopted the worship of some deity or deities as their formal centre. The Pythagorean lodges had a communal cult of the Muses. In the school of Aristotle at Athens there was a 'Museum,' a shrine of the Muses. When therefore Ptolemy determined to found in Alexandria a kind of university for the study of Greek literature and science, it was natural for him to make it in form an institution for a cult of the Muses. One of the persons of influence at his court was the Athenian refugee Demetrius of Phalerum, who had been a disciple of Aristotle and was himself a noted man of letters. It is likely then that the school of Aristotle, with its 'Museum' and its library, served to some extent as a model for Ptolemy.

The work begun by the first Ptolemy was completed by his son, called by later generations Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–247)—a 'Roi Soleil' who evinced a lively interest in literature

**Museum and Library of Alexandria** and zoology. The

buildings of the Museum were annexed to the royal palace on the sea-front of Alexandria. When Strabo saw them in 24 B.C. they included a large common hall, used as a refectory, and a covered walk ('peripatos') like a university cloister. The head of the Museum, nominated by the king of Egypt, had the title 'Priest of the Muses.' Greek scholars and philosophers, attracted from all over the Greek world, who became Fellows of the Museum, received a stipend from the king, and, after 30 B.C., from the Roman government.

To facilitate their studies the Fellows of the Museum had, in close connexion with it, the great library. At the end of the reign of Philadelphus the Library is said to have contained 400,000 'mixed' rolls and 90,000 'unmixed' rolls. The term 'mixed' rolls is usually thought to mean rolls with more than one literary work

written in them. About 50 B.C. the number of rolls in the Great Library is given as 700,000. There was also a 'daughter' library connected with the Serapeum (temple of Serapis) in the native quarter of Alexandria, containing (in the time of Philadelphus) 42,800 rolls. It has been pointed out that so great a number of rolls, 'mixed' and 'unmixed,' in the Library and in the Serapeum would have been far in excess of what was required to contain the total number of literary works produced up to that date in the Greek world. Hence it is inferred that a large proportion of them must have

been replicas, and that the Library served not only for

**Combined Library and Publishing House**

the conservation of books but as a publisher's warehouse, from which books were distributed to the world. The Ptolemies would then have done a good business not only by the manufacture of papyrus paper but of books for export.

Stories are told about the avidity of the Greek kings of Egypt in collecting manuscripts. A valuable manuscript discovered on any boat touching Egypt was taken away for the Library and the owner given only a copy of it in exchange. At Athens the state kept a series of standard manuscripts of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Ptolemy III is said to have borrowed them for copying, depositing in Athens fifteen talents as pledge. He kept the Athenian manuscripts and returned only copies of them, forfeiting the money.

What the fate of the Alexandrine Library was, ancient documents do not enable us to know. A story current from the second century A.D. onwards says that it was burnt accidentally when Julius Caesar set fire to the Egyptian fleet in 47 B.C., but it is now usually thought that it was some warehouses on the sea-front, stocked with rolls for export, which were burnt, not the Library itself. (Birt, however, still adheres to the view that the Library was set on fire in 47 B.C.). Probably the great Library perished, by dispersion, neglect or the accidents of war, before the end of the third century A.D.

The Serapeum was demolished by the Christians in A.D. 391, and Sandys supposes that the smaller Library also ceased after



that to exist. Writing apparently shortly before that date, Aphthonius of Antioch speaks as if the Serapeum Library were still there. The story that the Mahomedan general, Amru, burnt the Alexandrine Library in A.D. 642 is not heard of till six centuries later, and is rejected by almost all modern scholars as an invention. There was then no library in Alexandria left to burn.

Under the Ptolemaic dynasty (323 to 30 B.C.) Alexandria, with its Museum and its Library, was the chief centre of Greek learned scholarship and science. In philosophy the primacy was still held by the schools of Athens.

But the last blossoming of Greek original poetry in the first half of the third century B.C. was connected with Alexandria. The poets—Philetas of Cos, Theocritus of Syracuse, Callimachus of Cyrene, Apollonius of Rhodes, Lycophron of Chalcis, Alexander the Aetolian and many others—had their homes in Greek lands outside Egypt, but to the brilliant Ptolemaic court, with its prospects of honour and reward, they were all alike drawn—‘singing birds in a cage,’ sneered contemporary satire.

The poetry of that age was marked by literary learning, by virtuosity. It abounded in echoes and allusions to the great poetry of the past. Far-fetched allusions to local mythology were all the fashion. The *Alexandria* of Lycophron, which we still possess, reaches the limit of pedantic obscurity. In Theocritus (see also page 1361) the poetic idealisation of the talk of shepherd-folk in Cos and Sicily has loveliness and charm; but it was a literary artifice which appealed to sophisticated city-dwellers by giving them imaginary refreshment in a simple primitive world unlike their own.

Learned studies at Alexandria received a great blow on the accession of the bloated and murderous Ptolemy VII (Euergetes II) in 145 B.C.; numbers of the scholars and philosophers and physicians fled or were banished, and so were scattered over the Greek world—not because Ptolemy VII was hostile to literature as such (he himself aspired to be an author, and left a book of memoirs in which he gave a

lively picture of the eccentricities of his uncle, Antiochus Epiphanes), but because the intellectuals of Alexandria had largely been supporters of his brother, Ptolemy VI, whom he hated. As a place of learning Alexandria never recovered its eminence.

Of the four men who were curators of the library between 285 and 145, it is to be noted that Eratosthenes was the only one who was great in the field of science as well as in that of letters: Zenodotus, Aristophanes and Aristarchus were literary critics pure and simple. The work of all three was largely concerned in the establishment of an authorised text of Homer. Aristarchus also published commentaries on Homer, in which he made a careful study of Homeric language and topography and the mythology in Homer as compared with other versions of it. Later antiquity always looked upon Aristarchus as the Homeric critic par excellence. But the activities of the three extended to Greek literature generally. It fell to Zenodotus to classify the works of the Greek poets: he dealt himself with the lyric poets and commissioned Alexander the Aetolian to classify the tragedians and Lycophron the writers of comedies.

Aristophanes published **Critical Works** of grammatical **by the Curators** theory, collections of notable words and phrases, and a collection of Greek proverbs. Aristarchus (215–145) edited with commentaries the texts of Hesiod, Alcaeus and Pindar, and wrote commentaries on Archilochus and on the Athenian dramatists.

The work of Eratosthenes (276–195) covered a large field. His friends called him ‘Pentathlos’ (an athlete who excelled in five different kinds of contest) and his enemies ‘Beta,’ because he was second best, they said, in so many departments and first in none. The more important section of his work was concerned with different branches of science, and is therefore considered in Chapter 73. He produced also an important work on world chronology, in which he tried to fix the dates, not only of political events, but of philosophers and poets. In moral philosophy a treatise of Eratosthenes, *On Good and Evil Things*, is mentioned. In the field of letters Eratosthenes wrote

a study marked by fine scholarship on the Old Comedy. But he was also himself a poet of distinction and published two small epics and an elegiac poem treating fragments of the traditional mythology. Arsinoë, a book written in memory of the unhappy sister-wife of the degenerate Ptolemy IV, who had been murdered by the palace cabal, was a fruit of his old age. None of the writings of this remarkable man remain, but Eratosthenes laid the foundation of later books on geography (see page 2073) and chronology, in which some of his work still survives for us, with fragments which reveal its high quality.

No other writers besides the four curators mentioned, and the three poets, Callimachus, Alexander and Lycophron, are expressly connected in the statements which have come down to us with the royal Library at Alexandria, or the Museum; but we know of a large number of men, active in the field of letters or of scientific research at Alexandria, and no doubt they used the special facilities which Alexandria afforded. It was here that the later literary tradition regarding the lives and characters of the Greek writers and philosophers, such as we find it in books of the Roman age, was given form and fixed—anecdotal gossip, which appealed to the appetite of the later Greeks, entering largely into it.

In the field of history an important contribution was made under the first Ptolemy by the native Egyptian priest, Manetho, who, with the patronage of the court, wrote in Greek an account of ancient Egyptian history, based on real knowledge of the documents, which no Greek writer on the subject ever took the trouble to acquire. But so far as the writing of contemporary history went, Alexandria made no great contribution: of the two chief historians of the centuries between Alexander and the Christian era, one, Polybius, wrote at Rome or in Greece, the other, Posidonius, in Rhodes. In Timagenes however (born c. 75 B.C.) Alexandria had an industrious historical writer of the second or third rank. His universal history is probably the original on which the Latin history of Trogus Pompeius was based, and of

Trogus we still possess a poor and pretentious abridgement, the work of Justin.

In geographical discovery, on the other hand, Ptolemaic Egypt, with its fleets for war and commerce, did make notable contributions to knowledge. Philo, the admiral of the first Ptolemy, went up the Nile to Ethiopia and left a book about it; Dalion, presumably an Egyptian Greek, also made the journey to Ethiopia about the same time and described it; Pythagoras, an officer probably of Ptolemy II, prepared a treatise dealing with the Red Sea; Timosthenes of Rhodes, another admiral of Ptolemy II, produced a work *On Harbours* and another *On Islands*; Dionysius, sent as an ambassador of Ptolemy II to India, wrote about that country. A Greek called Simonides resided for five years in the Ethiopian capital, Meroë, probably in the latter half of the third century B.C., and embodied his impressions in a book about Ethiopia. Agatharchides of Cnidus (first half of second century B.C.) wrote geographical monographs, including one on the coasts of the Red Sea, of which some important fragments remain.

At an unknown date—probably about 100 B.C.—an Egyptian-Greek skipper, Hippalus, discovered the periodicity of the monsoons, which made direct voyages from the Red Sea to India possible for Greek merchantmen. Hippalus did not, so far as we know, leave any writing on the subject, but we have a little book of commercial information about the ports of the Red Sea and India and the wares exchanged between Egypt and India, written in the first century A.D. by an unknown Greek—called by its Latin title *Periplus Maris Erythraei*.

Details as to the achievements of the schools of Alexandria in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, mechanics and medicine are given in Chapter 73.

Of the pupils of Aristarchus one holds an important place in the history of letters. This was Dionysius (born c. 166 B.C.), an Alexandrine, commonly called Dionysius Thrax, because his family was of Thracian origin. Dionysius wrote the first elementary grammar of the Greek language. For centuries it remained the

standard book for schools and other grammars were based on it. Translated into Syriac at a later date, it became the foundation for Arabian grammatical science. Our modern grammatical terminology is largely drawn from it through Latin versions. Although Alexandrine by origin, Dionysius Thrax set up his school in Rhodes, which in the first century B.C., when the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt was breaking up, superseded Alexandria as the place resorted to by Greeks and Romans for literary studies.

Yet in the last half century before the Christian era the men who supplied the Graeco-Roman world with the handbooks

on Greek literature which the age required were largely Alexandrines. If the great days of original scholarship were past, there was an extensive demand, amongst Romans of literary leanings as well as amongst Greeks, for works which chopped up the older, learned literature into forms that made a superficial erudition easy to acquire—collections of excerpts, lexicons, abridgements, doxographies (opinions of philosophers).

The man who furnished most abundantly what that generation wanted was an Alexandrine, Didymus, who showed prodigious industry in making books out of the works of the older Alexandrine scholars—four thousand rolls, it is affirmed. Didymus got the nickname 'Chalkenteros,' which means 'with guts of brass.' He published a number of lexicons—a lexicon of puzzling words in the old literature, a lexicon of figures of speech, a lexicon of the comic poets, and yet others. He re-edited texts with commentaries and biographical notices of the authors. He wrote treatises on grammatical theory. The works of Didymus became in turn a quarry for the writers of other 'manuals,' so that a good part of the notes, called 'scholia,' appended to our existing manuscripts of the classics, transcribed in Constantinople centuries later, are derived from Didymus. It was another Alexandrine, contemporary with this Didymus, called Arius Didymus, who drew up the *Epitome* of the opinions of the philosophers, from which later doxographical works were drawn.

In the age following the birth of Christ Alexandria was only one amongst the seats of learning. Rome had now great libraries, and in the Greek cities of Asia Minor were the chief schools of rhetoric and medicine. But we still hear of Alexandrines who carried on the work of Didymus—Theon (a head of the Alexandrine school), Pamphilus, who wrote in ninety-five rolls a lexicon of obscure words (c. A.D. 50), Philoxenus, Apion. Of these Apion is best known, on account of the work of Josephus entitled *Against Apion*; for Apion, amongst other things, wrote against the Jews. From other sources we know that he was a vain, self-advertising pedant, who at one time was head of the school in succession to Theon. Josephus says that he was of native Egyptian origin, not a genuine Alexandrine; but this may have been merely an invention that Josephus disseminated as a statement which Apion would dislike intensely. The story of Androcles and the lion comes from Apion. Apion is singular in one way: he is the only person in the whole of pagan antiquity who, according to the statement of someone who had met him, professed to have seen a ghost.

In the second century A.D. Aelius Theon, who wrote commentaries on some of the classical authors and a book on the art of writing, still extant, belonged to Alexandria, and also a man, Apollonius Dyscolus, who elaborated the rules of Greek grammar, of which the foundations had been laid by Dionysius Thrax. In this late age of the Graeco-Roman world, when the ancient culture seemed dying in nearly all its branches, Apollonius registers an important advance in the science of Greek grammar. Perhaps one could not even say that Greek grammar was really scientific before. Only four, indeed, of the grammatical treatises of Apollonius have survived—on pronouns, on adverbs, on conjunctions, on syntax. But the later grammarians of Constantinople drew from his work, so that the system of Greek grammar brought to the West from Constantinople at the time of the Renaissance was largely derived, no doubt, directly or indirectly,

from Apollonius. His son, Herodian, who removed his school from Alexandria to Rome, also left grammatical works drawn upon by the later age.

Some time between the first and fourth century A.D. lived Valerius Harpocration of Alexandria, whose lexicon of the Attic Orators is still extant and of great value to-day, as it embodies much material from older lost works relating to the institutions of Athens in the fourth century B.C. In the latter part of the second century A.D. lived the author of an extant substantial work (called the *Onomasticon*) which preserves a good deal of interesting information about Attic words and phrases, Julius Pollux. He ultimately settled as a professor at Athens, but is so far connected with Alexandria that his home was the neighbouring old Greek city of Naukratis. Hephæstion of Alexandria (probably in the middle of the second century A.D.) wrote the standard work on Greek poetical metres, of which an abridgement survives.

Thus Alexandria, with its museum and library, remained during the first two centuries of the Christian era the chief

centre for philological and grammatical studies: in other branches of culture and science it had no

longer any special monopoly. As regards medical studies, for instance, Pergamum and Rome stood as high, or higher. But the medical schools of Alexandria still continued in being. The last great medical writer of antiquity, Galen (A.D. 131 to 201), of whom we still possess 118 treatises, studied at Alexandria, as well as at the schools of Asia Minor, before he settled in Rome (see also pages 2077-79).

In philosophy, the Alexandrine schools gained prestige by some eminent names under the Roman Empire. It was at Alexandria that an attempt was made just before and just after the beginning of the Christian era by Hellenistic Jews resident in the great Gentile city, to combine the doctrines of Judaism with the Greek philosophical tradition. Of this attempt we have a monument\* in the voluminous works of Philo of Alexandria, a contemporary of Jesus Christ. The problem of educated Greek Christians

was to some extent the same as the problem of Hellenistic Jews, since Christianity was built upon presuppositions taken over from Israel. And at Alexandria men arose in the Christian community who, largely influenced by Philo, tried to combine Christianity with Greek philosophy. A Stoic converted to Christianity, called Pantaenus, was lecturing

#### Philosophical Schools at Alexandria

at Alexandria in the latter part of the second century A.D. His disciple, the large-hearted Clement of Alexandria (about A.D. 160 to 215) carried on his work, and Clement's disciple, Origen (A.D. 185 to 254), who taught in his turn at Alexandria, was the greatest scholar of the Christian Church before S. Jerome, and the greatest philosopher of the Christian Church before S. Augustine. A substantial part of the works of Clement and Origen survives. The Christian philosophical school of Alexandria existed under a succession of leaders (catechists) till the death of the last leader Didymus (A.D. 395); its history is studied in Chapter 87.

A contemporary of Origen at Alexandria was the pagan philosopher, Ammonius Saccas, who is said to have been a Christian in his early life. It was the lectures of Ammonius which gave another Egyptian Greek, Plotinus (A.D. 204 to 270), the first principles of his philosophy. Plotinus afterwards settled in Italy, and became the founder of the type of philosophy called neo-Platonism. His works still remain, and secure him an abiding place in the history of human thought, since they entitle him to be considered the last great original thinker of pagan antiquity. Except for the impulse given to Plotinus by Ammonius Saccas, the neo-Platonic philosophy was not specially connected with Alexandria till the fifth century A.D., when Theon, a leading philosopher and mathematician of the time, taught in Alexandria. He was the father of the celebrated Hypatia, the woman philosopher who was murdered by the Alexandrine mob in the belief that such savage fanaticism was the religion of Christ. Theon is the last man of whom it is recorded that he was a Fellow of the Alexandrine Museum.



Many of the mural paintings in the catacombs are portrait figures of the deceased, often represented in an attitude of prayer. The third century example (left) depicts a consecrated virgin with the symbolic veil over her head and falling upon her tunic. Variation in pose is shown on the right, where the deceased is depicted as a server of the altar. The two below are middle fourth century.



It is to the catacombs that we must turn for the earliest examples of Christian art, both because they have suffered comparatively little in the course of the ages, and because throughout the early centuries the mural decoration of churches was discountenanced; figure subjects were particularly forbidden, especially representations of the Persons of the Trinity. Not until the end of the fourth century were pictures admitted into the churches, ostensibly for the instruction of the illiterate.

#### EARLY CHRISTIAN PAINTINGS FROM THE UNDERGROUND CEMETERIES OF ROME

*From Wilbert, 'Le Pitture delle Catacombe Romane'*

# THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY

Successful Emergence of the Monotheistic Religion that  
was henceforward to Dominate the Western World

By the Very Rev. W. R. INGE

Dean of S. Paul's Cathedral, London; Author of *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, etc.

FROM the point of view of the secular historian the most striking fact about Christianity is that a religion which had its roots in the soil of Palestine, in a purely Semitic atmosphere—for it is impossible to find any clear traces of Greek influence in the teaching of the Founder—rapidly established itself in the Graeco-Roman world, and at last forced the civil government of the Empire to relinquish its attitude of hostility and to make a concordat with it. The rejection of Buddhism in India, followed by its acceptance in China, furnishes an obvious parallel. Buddhism was a product of Indian thought and civilization, as Christianity was a product of Palestine; but in both cases the established church was too strong for the reformers, and the new cult was driven out, to try its fortunes in other lands. Christianity is now the least Oriental of all religions, and its appeals to the Semitic races have not succeeded.

The Judaism of the Dispersion differed greatly from the Temple worship of Jerusalem, and was much more hospitable to foreign ideas. To the pagans, the Jews were a people who had no temples, and who worshipped God without images. The Jewish propaganda, which was active, proclaimed a strict monotheism and a strict morality. The crusade against 'idolatry,' a natural and often harmless practice which was to be admitted later in the Catholic Church, seems to us almost inexplicable, but it was thoroughly characteristic of the East. The Greeks and Romans observed this alien worship with dislike, curiosity, and yet with respect. There was something 'philosophic' about Judaism. Its adherents gained from the easy-going Roman government more than toleration; for a non-citizen there were

real advantages in becoming a Jew. Judaism was a 'religio licita'—a religion recognized by the civil authorities.

The network of synagogues at first provided a nucleus for Christian preaching; but before long conversions of Jews to Christianity became infrequent, and the prevailing Jewish attitude towards Christians was a bitter hostility which found vent in calumnies, too readily believed by the masses, to the effect that the Christian assemblies were scenes of cannibalism and licentious orgies. The Church quickly turned to the Gentiles, adapting its teaching and rites so as to be intelligible to the converts from paganism.

The transference of the Gospel to European soil was mainly the work of S. Paul, who must be pronounced one of the greatest men who ever lived, when we consider the **Greatness of boldness of his conception, S. Paul's work** the vast energy with which he carried it out, and the immense influence of his writings, mere letters though they are in form. But we have to consider the fortunes of the Christian Church after the Apostolic age, down to the final capitulation of the Empire under Constantine.

After the Messianic dream of an approaching advent of Christ in glory had faded away, or been relegated to the distant future, the main themes of mission preaching were: the one God, as opposed to polytheism; Jesus as the Lord or Saviour; the Resurrection as opposed to the immortality of the soul without the body; and asceticism or self-control, which meant especially sexual purity. There was, however, a philosophical side to the teaching, a Christian Gnosis which resembled the contemporary religious



#### JOURNEYS OF THE MAN WHO DID MOST TO SPREAD CHRISTIANITY

On his first journey S. Paul started from Antioch and visited Cyprus, Pamphylia and Galatia, returning by sea from Attalia. The second journey took him through Syria, Cilicia and Galatia to Troas, whence he crossed to Macedonia and visited Athens and Corinth, returning by sea to Ephesus and Caesarea and visiting Jerusalem. On the third journey he covered much of the earlier ground and then crossed from Ephesus to Macedonia, visiting Corinth before sailing for Troas and Caesarea.

philosophy of the pagans. Arguments from Old Testament prophecy formed a part of popular preaching. But from the first the note of world-renunciation was strongly sounded. The Christians felt that they had no continuing city on earth; heaven was their home.

Christian preaching enjoyed from the outset a great advantage over paganism in its freedom from compromising traditions. No process of allegorising could prevent the legends about the old gods from being unedifying, and their persons (especially in the case of Egypt) grotesque. Besides, the Olympians were dying in any case; 'divus Caesar'—the deified emperor—was less inspiring than a national flag; and the mystery cults were mixed with many superstitions. Towards the tolerant syncretism of the current paganism Christianity offered a stubborn and trenchant opposition, and at length crushed its rivals. There was indeed not much of value in these cults that the Church could not offer in a purer form.

Perhaps the most effective appeal of

the Christian missionaries was to point to the social life of the little brotherhood of believers. In the second century, when, owing to the dangers and disabilities which attached to the Christian profession, the half-hearted and insincere were weeded out, the relation of Christians to each other seems to have been almost ideal. Their mutual affection was proverbial among the pagans; there were singularly few moral scandals; and their loving care for the sick and suffering was unlike anything that paganism could show. There is no reasonable doubt that at this time the Christian community was morally far in advance of the society in which it lived. The Church has been compared, on one side, to a great benefit society with very liberal management; but at the same time begging and imposture were not encouraged. In A.D. 250 the Roman Church supported fifteen hundred poor, as well as one hundred clergy.

As regards slavery, the Church did not condemn the institution, nor forbid its members to own slaves; but Christian



slaves were regarded as brethren and sisters in Christ, and there was no obstacle to a slave becoming a priest, or even a bishop, though this would hardly be possible until the slave had gained his freedom. The honour of female Christian slaves was of course respected. The manumission of slaves was encouraged as an act of charity. We may suppose that Christians generally treated their slaves more humanely than the pagans, as they were certainly enjoined to do; but it is something of a shock to read, among the canons of the Council of Elvira at the end of the third century, a provision for dealing with the case of a mistress who 'in a fit of passion shall have beaten her maid-servant so that the latter expires in agony within three days.'

When a plague broke out at Alexandria about A.D. 250, the pagans, according to the bishop Dionysius, fled, leaving the sick untended and the dead unburied, while 'most' of the Christians distinguished themselves by visiting and tending the sick for the sake of Christ, so that many of them, including some presbyters and deacons, took the infection and died.



#### SLAVE BADGE

The growing humanity due to Christianity is suggested by the substitution of badges, authorising his arrest, for the branding previously inflicted upon a slave who had run away.

*British Museum*

Cyprian says that the same thing happened during a plague at Carthage, and Eusebius tells the same story about the great plague in the time of Maximin.

Materials are wanting for an estimate of the numbers of Christians at different points of time before the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313). Harnack, after an exhaustive examination of the evidence, concludes that until the middle of the third century the Christians were quite a small minority of the population, but that a large

accession to their numbers took place between A.D. 250 and the great persecution. He writes: 'It is extremely probable that in one or two provinces Christians did embrace a half, or very nearly a half, of the population by the opening of the fourth century, while in several cities Christians already formed a majority, and in fact a large majority, of the inhabitants. Christianity must have exceeded its first million long ago.'

Harnack divides the Empire into four sections—those in which, at the beginning of the fourth century, the Church numbered nearly half the population; those in which, though its adherents were in a



#### A SECOND-CENTURY BAPTISM IN RUNNING WATER

Apart from their artistic interest, the mural paintings in the catacombs are valuable for the light they throw on early Christian practice. This painting, dating from the second half of the second century, shows a baptism by immersion. All the early authorities contemplate the use of running, or 'living,' water in the rite of baptism. The catacomb paintings are executed in earth colours on a surface of white stucco imposed on the tufa walls and ceilings of the chambers.

*From Wilpert, 'Le Pitture delle Catacombe Romane'*

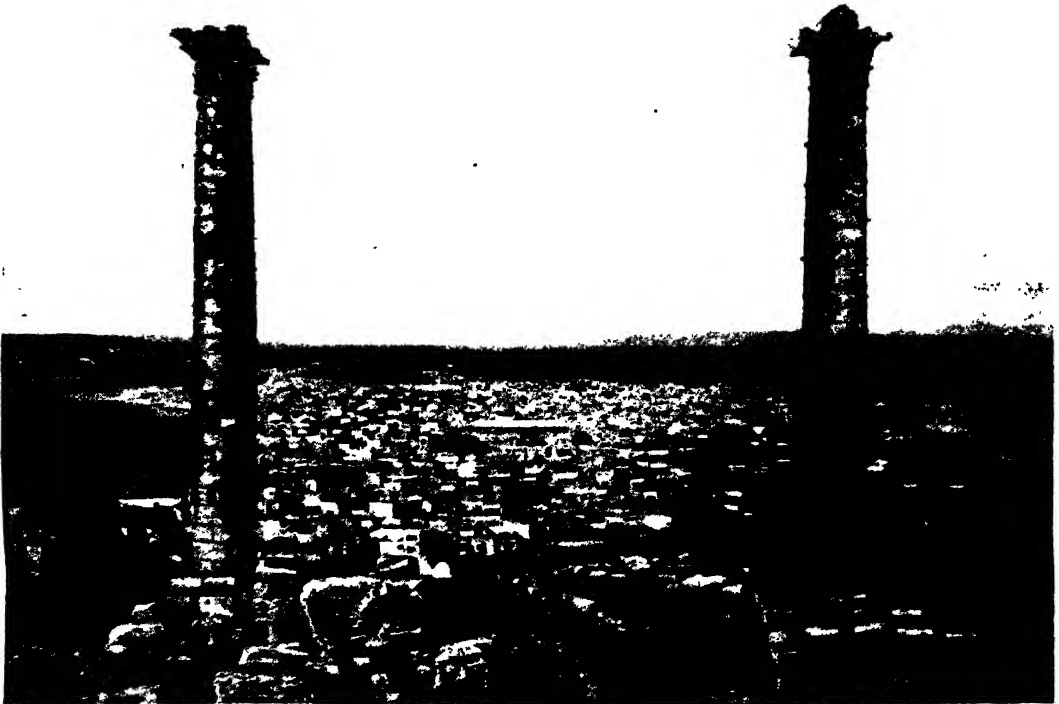


decided minority, it was able to hold its own with other religions ; those in which it was sparsely scattered ; and those in which it was very weak or was hardly to be found at all. The first class includes nearly the whole of what is now Asia Minor, that portion of Thrace which lay over against Bithynia, and the province of Armenia. Eusebius also says that Edessa was an entirely Christian city. The second section includes Antioch and the adjoining territory, Cyprus, Alexandria, Rome itself, lower Italy and certain parts of central Italy. In Rome there may have been about 100,000 Christians, including many families of high social standing. From other districts of Italy sixty bishops could be assembled as early as 251.

To this list of the parts of the Empire where Christianity was strong, though not yet predominant, must be added the Roman province of Africa (the district about Carthage) and Numidia. Not much is known about Spain, but it seems

probable that we ought to include this country also in the second group, as well as the maritime parts of Greece, Macedonia and the Aegean Islands, and the southern coast of Gaul.

Palestine, Phoenicia, Arabia Felix and the island parts of Greece and Macedonia, with Epirus, Dardania, Dalmatia, Moesia and Pannonia, belong to the third class, in which the Church was weak. In Palestine and Phoenicia the Church retained its footing only in the partially Hellenised districts. In the same category Harnack places most of northern Italy, Mauretania and Tripolitana. Lastly, the Church was a negligible influence in the western section of upper Italy, in central and upper Gaul, in Belgica, Germany and Raetia. Harnack 'does not venture to pronounce any judgement' on the extension of Christianity to Britain, Noricum, Cyrenaica and Crete ; but there must surely have been many Christians in the two last.



**EDESSA, THE CRADLE OF EASTERN CHRISTIANITY**

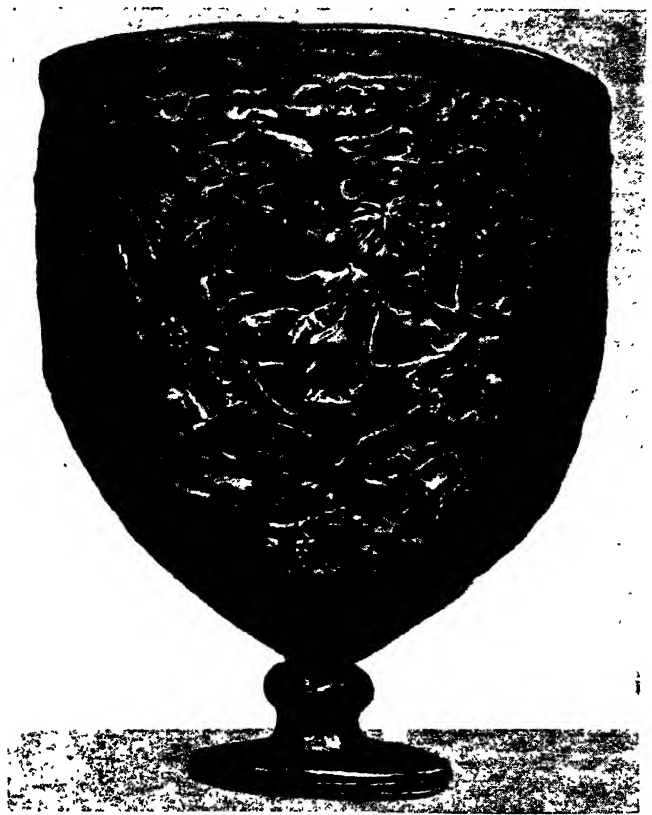
Edessa, the modern Urfa, in north-west Mesopotamia, is a city with an immensely long history going back to the Babylonian-Assyrian age. About 132 B.C. it became the seat of a local dynasty, one of whose kings raised the pillars seen in this photograph. Christianity was introduced in the Jewish colony in the second century, and the Church there developed a national spirit, using the Syriac language and becoming the first centre of Christianity in the Syriac-speaking world.

*From F. C. Burkitt, 'Early Eastern Christianity'*

Latin Christianity hardly existed before the third century; for even the church of Rome was still Greek till the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Even the Latin Fathers, such as Ambrose, Jerome, Victorinus and Augustine, took their theology from Greece. In our period, the headquarters of Hellenism was Alexandria; but after the foundation of Constantinople as the imperial city, 'it was the Hellenism of Asia Minor, not that of Egypt, which took the lead.' What Constantine did was to let his leading provinces have the religion that they desired.

Among what classes did the Gospel spread most rapidly? S. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, admits or boasts that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.' Celsus was to bring the same charge a century later. To the educated pagan there was something mean in trying to capture converts from the ignorant populace. But the facts were not quite so. Though the majority of converts were persons in a humble station, including many slaves—but we must remember that some of the slaves in great families were well educated—we hear, even in the Acts, of Sergius Paulus the proconsul of Cyprus, and of Dionysius the Areopagite at Athens. Pliny found many Christians 'of all ranks' in Bithynia. In Rome we hear before long of a noble lady, Pomponia Graecina, and of the consul T. Flavius Clemens and his wife becoming Christians.

The denunciations of wealth in the Church, which appear as early as the Epistle of James and the 'Shepherd' of Hermas (c. A.D. 145), are also significant. At Alexandria in the time of Clement and Origen it is plain that many persons of wealth and high position, and also of



#### REPUTED LIKENESS OF JESUS CHRIST

This silver chalice, found at Antioch, dates from the first century and the figures on its open-work container are claimed to be authentic portraits of Christ and His followers. Here the Saviour is shown as a beardless man, a dove above Him and at His side a lamb and a plate of loaves and fishes. The lower figures are S. Peter (left) and S. Paul.

*From Dr. Eisen, 'The Great Chalice of Antioch'*

learning, had already embraced Christianity. By 258, the date of the persecution under Valerian, there is no longer any pretence that the Christian religion is confined to the lower orders. The emperor decrees that senators and high officials and knights adopting the faith are to lose their position and be stripped of their property. If they are still contumacious, they are to be beheaded. Some of the prominent bishops, such as Cyprian and Dionysius of Alexandria, were now members of the upper class. Porphyry admits that eminent members of the learned professions had begun to 'pry into the secrets of this philosophy.'

The new faith penetrated very early into 'Caesar's household,' and by Cyprian's time some Christians held

influential and lucrative appointments at court. In the army it was less prominent, for the Church had certain qualms of conscience with regard to the compatibility of military service with the injunctions of Christ. Tertullian was in favour of forbidding all Christians to be soldiers; but this disapproval did not prevent a considerable and increasing number from enlisting. Attempts were even made to purge the army of Christians, as if their loyalty were uncertain. But nothing is more remarkable than the complete abstention of this persecuted body from political disaffection. It was impossible to convict Christians of high treason. Several martyrdoms of soldiers are, however, recorded.

The prominent part taken by women in spreading Christianity will surprise no one. Priscilla, or Prisca, and Phoebe were notable helpers of S. Paul, and three women, Lydia, Euodia and Syntyche, took part in founding the church at Philippi. Damaris and the four daughters of Philip also figure in the Acts. It was necessary to limit the privileges of women in public speaking and prophesying. The romance of Paul and Thecla, a forgery, was agreeable to the popular taste. Among the Gnostics especially women played a great part, and Marcion was accompanied by 'holy women.' Tertullian, who disliked the sex, complains that the

heretical women are 'very forward.' It became very common for a husband to remain a pagan, while the wife was a Christian, which led to angry accusations of priestly interference in domestic life. The question of mixed marriages was already troublesome when S. Paul wrote to the Corinthians. There was no chivalrous feeling in favour of sparing women in the persecutions, and, as might be expected, they showed as much fortitude as the men.

In attempting to estimate the relations between paganism and Christianity, we are chiefly dependent on

the not wholly impartial testimony of Christian writers. **Pagan references to Christianity**

It may therefore be worth while to collect the very disappointing references to the new religion which are scattered over the pagan literature of the period. Tacitus and Suetonius both refer to the outrages of Nero upon the Roman Christians. Neither of them has taken the slightest trouble to verify the absurd calumnies which were current in aristocratic circles about the beliefs and practices of a despised sect. Tacitus believes that the Christians worshipped an ass, an invention, possibly of Jewish origin, which seems also to have been believed by Plutarch and Fronto. It had a long life. Tertullian says that a Jew posted up a placard at Carthage

representing a man with the ears and one foot of an ass, and inscribed 'Onocoites, the god of the Christians.' In the palace of Severus, about the same date, one of the imperial pages has scrawled on the wall a man with an ass's head, hanging on a cross. Another figure is adoring him, and underneath he has written, 'Alexamenus worships his god.'

The famous letters of Pliny the Younger to Trajan belong to the same period as the history of Tacitus. More must be said of them when we come to the persecutions. Here it is only necessary to say that the same accusations against the character of the Christians



**RELICS OF CYRENE'S CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

Originally a Greek colony, Cyrene passed under Roman domination in 96 B.C., when it was still a great city with a keen intellectual life. Synesius, the cultured bishop of Ptolemais, was one of its distinguished sons. The fallen pillars of the Christian basilica, one of the earliest in North Africa, were re-erected in the present century.

were made to Pliny, but on investigation he became convinced that there was no truth in them.

There is a letter of Hadrian which mentions the Christians in a tone that is caustic rather than hostile. In the time of the Antonines, Aristides the rhetorician compares the cynics with 'the impious men in Palestine' (but why in Palestine?) who are the enemies of Greek culture and pour scorn on Demosthenes; they divide households and shirk their civic duties. Fronto, the tutor of Marcus Aurelius, gives a ridiculous description of a Christian banquet, ending in an obscene orgy. Did Marcus Aurelius himself believe these libels? We cannot tell; he only says by the way that a man ought to be ready to die with dignity, 'not out of pure obstinacy, like the Christians.' 'Obstinacy' was a natural motive for an official to impute to these troublesome conscientious objectors.

The references of Galen, the physician, are more interesting:

Most men cannot follow a chain of reasoning and therefore they must be taught by means of parables. So we see, in our own time, the men who are called Christians gathering their faith from parables. And yet they sometimes act like true philosophers. We can see with our own eyes that they despise death, and further, that they are led by a sense of modesty to avoid the lusts of the flesh. For there are some among them, both men and women, who have maintained their chastity unbroken throughout their lives. There are even some who, in self-discipline and self-control, and by their intense desire to attain moral excellence, have advanced so far that they are in no way inferior to true philosophers.

The True Word of Celsus was the first systematic attack upon the Christian religion. It has, of course, been lost; we must guess at its contents from the answer to it written many years later by Origen. It contains some shrewd criticisms upon Christian beliefs; but what makes it most interesting is the realization of the author, who writes as an imperial official, that the Empire was in danger, and that the Church was doing nothing to save it. He



#### EARLY CHRISTIANS OF ROME

Women played a prominent part in spreading Christianity, and showed as much fortitude in the persecutions as the men. The catacombs contain many portraits like the above, both named and unnamed. The Liberius on the right seems from his robes to have been a priest.

*From Wispert, 'Le Pitture delle Catacombe Romane'*

shows that the Empire alone stands between civilization and a welter of barbarism. Will not the Christians take their part in defending society against the formidable enemies who threatened it? If the whole Empire became Christian, it would fall an easy prey to its invaders.

Tertullian says that in his time the average citizen was rather contemptuous of than hostile to the Christians. 'So-and-so is a good man, though he is a Christian.' 'I can't understand why such a sensible fellow as Lucius should suddenly turn Christian.' Such remarks were frequent; and the love of Christians for each other was observed with wonder.

The most serious attack upon Christianity, that of Porphyry the neo-Platonist, barely falls inside our period. His assault anticipated, it seems, much of the rationalist criticism of the nineteenth century. The Christians felt the attack to be formidable, but have left us very little by which we can judge of its contents.

We must now turn to the relations between the Christian Church and the Roman government, from the time when the Christians began to attract the attention of the outside world to the Edict of Toleration (Edict of Milan) which brought the era of persecution to an end. The evidence is very disjointed and unsatisfactory. There is no consecutive account of the spread of the Church and the reactions against it; there are some complete gaps in the record; and the evidence on both sides is tainted by contempt, ignorance and hatred.

We naturally ask first how a government so tolerant in religious matters as that of Rome came to persecute a body of men who took no part in public life, and cannot have been considered politically dangerous. As has been said in Chapter 67, the main object of religion at Rome was the welfare of the state, which required every citizen to take his part in 'justice towards the gods.' We have also seen that foreign gods—'di novensiles' as they were called—were admitted, under supervision. The conditions of toleration were that the new cults should not interfere with the national worship, and that they should not offend against public morals. The magistrates from time to time received instructions to prevent foreign worships; but these were understood to refer mainly to Roman citizens, and even then were not enforced.

Still, from time to time the government acted with as much energy as it showed later against the Christians. In 188 B.C. the Bacchanalian rites, long held in secret, excited alarm, and a widespread 'conspiracy' was brought to light. About four thousand persons were put to death. In 50 B.C. the temples of Isis and Serapis at Rome were destroyed. Tiberius crucified the priests of Isis, destroyed the temples and banished the worshippers from Italy in consequence of a grave moral scandal. The cult was very soon re-established. These sporadic persecutions are just what we shall find in the case of Christianity.

The Jews were treated with indulgence, being allowed to exercise their religion freely, and to claim exemption from duties which conflicted with it, including service in the army, while their synagogues were exempted from the law against associations. Yet even the Jews (and no doubt the Christians with them) were banished from Rome by Claudius, and a little earlier Tiberius sent four thousand of them to Sardinia to put down brigandage there; 'if they died from the unhealthiness of the climate,' says Tacitus, 'it would be a cheap loss.' After the destruction of Jerusalem they were, in the eyes of the government, 'the quondam Jews,' and were protected, as before, by the law—which did not prevent furious Jew-hunts



AN EARLY PAINTING OF THE EUCHARIST

The mural decorations of the Christian catacombs do not include a very wide range of subjects. Incidents from the life of Christ are few and the Crucifixion and Passion never appear. Representations of the Eucharist—the most misrepresented practice of the early Church—are not uncommon; the example above dates from the second half of the second century. The baskets probably refer to the miracle of the loaves and fishes, an incident often illustrated in these tomb frescoes.

*From Wispert, 'Le Pitture delle Catacombe Romane'*

now and then by the populace. The Jews were unpopular but not dangerous; it was understood that Judaism made no claim whatever to become a universal religion.

The writer of the Acts has been accused of wishing to represent the attitude of the Roman authorities in too favourable a light, but the charge can hardly be sustained. S. Paul deliberately chose for his mission the centres of Roman provincial government, and had far less trouble with the officials than with the Jews. The new movement was disliked as making a breach with established social customs. The conduct of the believers seemed ostentatiously anti-social and fanatical, and sometimes trade interests were directly injured, as at Philippi and Ephesus. Their meetings were held, not in licensed synagogues, but in private houses; and who could tell what went on there? Jewish malice readily furnished an answer.

It has been commonly supposed that S. Paul suffered as a martyr at Rome, by decapitation, at the end of the two years' imprisonment, or rather detention, mentioned in the last chapter of the Acts. It is not clear under what law this penalty could have been inflicted on a Roman citizen, and it seems more likely that when his accusers failed to appear—it was a thankless and expensive business for provincials to come to Rome to prosecute a citizen—the apostle was at last released. He may even have fulfilled his intention of visiting Spain; but nothing certain is known of his subsequent career.

The atrocities against the 'people popularly called Christians,' after the burning of Rome under Nero in A.D. 64, are described by Tacitus, whose ignorance of Christianity, as late as A.D. 120, is rather surprising. He tells us that Nero, in order to remove from himself the suspicion of having himself ordered the city to be fired, accused the Christians, who were universally detested for their crimes and vices, and caused a 'vast multitude' of 'them to be put to death, with various tortures. This is known to Church history as the First Persecution. There has been much

discussion about it, and the facts are not by any means certain.

We may dismiss the theory that the victims were not Christians but Jews. We may take it as almost certain that most of them were very humble folk, converts from paganism. The 'vast multitude' need not be taken literally in a rhetorical writer like Tacitus; a few hundreds would

justify him in using the expression. The testimony of Sulpicius (fifth century) and Orosius, who mention the martyrdoms of Peter and Paul, is worth little. But under what law were the martyrs condemned to death? Tacitus says that they were arrested and tried on the charge of arson, and that some of them pleaded guilty. Either confessions were extorted by torture, or, which is perhaps more likely, the subservient court declared falsely that confessions had been made. After this all who admitted being Christians would be sentenced as accomplices.

E. G. Hardy thinks it possibly significant that the form of punishment was that prescribed for black magic; but there is no indication that any charge except that of complicity in a plot to burn the city was brought. Neither Clement of Rome, who says that a great number of victims were tortured to death (he does not say 'at Rome') when Peter and Paul were martyred, nor Melito of Sardis (about A.D. 170) adds much to our knowledge.

Opinions differ as to whether Nero's action 'resolved itself into a permanent administrative principle in dealing with the Christians.' Did the power of coercion vested in the prefect of Rome authorise him to hunt down Christians at any time, not for any 'crime connected with the name,' but as Christians, who were known to be 'enemies of the human race'? Tertullian says that while everything else connected with Nero has been wiped out, this one institute of Nero has survived; the actual phrase seems to be suggested by Suetonius. Tertullian, full of the idea that Nero was the first persecutor, assumed that the principles of dealing with the Christians constituted one of the 'precedents' established by him, but Suetonius does not say this.

**Victims of the First Persecution**

**Uncertainty as to the fate of S. Paul**

Later persecutors, so far as we know, never appealed to Nero. Tertullian himself never speaks of Christians being 'hunted down like wild beasts.' They were not, in fact, outlawed; it was only when it suited opportunist magistrates to take this line that confession of the name was taken to be confession of the crimes, especially disloyalty to the government, popularly associated with the name. Here I agree with Merrill against the majority of modern scholars.

Nor must too much importance be attached to the undoubtedly dangerous position of Christianity as a religion not officially permitted.

**Official mistrust of private associations** The Roman government, like almost all other despotic monarchies, was very jealous and suspicious of private associations. There were very many of these all over the Empire, which went by such different names as 'collegia,' 'sodalitates,' 'factiones,' 'corporata'—associations, societies, clubs; some of these were religious, others social; others were trade unions. The government licensed some of them, but the majority probably were unlicensed—'illicita.' This did not mean, as a rule, that the members of unlicensed societies were liable to criminal proceedings, unless indeed they refused to break up their organization when ordered to do so; the chief difference between a licensed and an unlicensed society was that the former was recognized by the law as a corporation, with the right of holding property and receiving bequests. An unincorporated society might at any time be suppressed, if the officials thought that it harboured either immorality or disloyalty; but to suppose that it existed in a state of permanent outlawry would be a great mistake.

The whole matter, as it concerned the 'collegia' (associations) and the churches, was an affair of police administration, not of judicial procedure. This accounts for the unsystematic and spasmodic character of the earlier persecutions. It is really astonishing how impossible it was to fasten on the Christians any charge of revolutionary aims, a fact which makes the popular comparison of the early Christians with modern communists

utterly ridiculous. The government had always a weapon in reserve against the Christians, but it was not at all afraid of them, until the third century. Circumstances might arise, however, which seemed to call for interference.

Such circumstances arose in the reign of Domitian, about A.D. 95. This emperor, though cruel and profligate, was something of a religious reformer, and his influence was likely to have the effect of screwing up the severity of the provincial governors against the Christians. But soon something happened which touched the emperor more nearly. His own cousin, Flavius Clemens, with his wife, Flavia Domitilla, was accused of 'atheism.' Suetonius says that Clemens was a man of 'contemptible lack of energy,' but that he was condemned 'almost while still consul, on the most slender suspicion.' Clemens was executed, his wife, the emperor's niece, was banished to Pandateria. Many others were punished on the same charge, including the aristocrat Acilius Glabrio, who was suspected of revolutionary tendencies. It is almost certain that Clemens and Domitilla were Christians, and their two sons were the destined successors to the Empire, since Domitian had no children.

Under what law were they condemned? Sacrilege was a criminal offence, atheism was not. Domitian probably tried the accused himself, since they were persons of **Doubtful legality of the condemnations** very high standing, and probably strained the law of 'majestas' (treason) to cover refusal to worship the state gods. If so, this precedent was not the usual way of dealing with the Christians. It is even possible that they fell victims to the insane jealousy of the tyrant, and did not suffer for their faith at all.

But it may have been at this time that a simple test was established whereby Christians could always be identified without difficulty. The worship of 'Rome and Augustus,' established almost everywhere, and especially in Asia, where the Christians were strongest, made it very easy to convict the Christians of disloyalty by requiring them to pay formal divine honours to the emperor or his



'Genius.' This was, in fact, the way in which the majority of the martyrs were sent to their deaths.

It is not likely that the executions under Domitian were very numerous. The Apocalypse, it is true, seems to show a fierce hatred against the Empire which presupposes very severe provocation. But it is probable that this hatred is Jewish rather than Christian, and that the terrible severity of the Romans to the Jews after the war under Vespasian and Titus had more to do with the fury of the apocalypticist than any persecution of the Church. On the other side, we must discount some of the favourable language of the second-century Apologists, who write with a conciliatory motive.

That we have to attach such great importance to the correspondence between Plinius Secundus, commonly known as Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia-Pontus, and the emperor Trajan, illustrates the scantiness of our materials. Bithynia-Pontus was considered a difficult province, so that Trajan thought it expedient to take it away from the Senate and send his own governor, in the person of Pliny, to administer it. The circumstances were peculiar; we need not suppose that all Trajan's governors troubled him with trifles like questions as to whether the fire brigade of Nicomedia should be allowed to form a union. In his second year of office Pliny came in contact with the Christian problem.

He informs the emperor that a number of persons had been brought before him, and that they were accused of being Christians. He asked them singly, no doubt, whether it was true. When they said 'Yes,'

**Pliny's methods with the Christians**

he asked them the question a second and then a third time, informing them that the penalty was death. If they persisted, he ordered them to be executed, convinced that such contumacy as this could have no excuse. The letter implies that Pliny was following the custom of the province in such matters. He has really no doubt about the propriety of his action; but as a humane man he dislikes having to punish a large number of harmless citizens—for

he had convinced himself that the charges of immorality against them were quite baseless—and he is puzzled by this extreme 'obstinacy.' Could the emperor suggest any way of sparing them? The details which he gives about the manners and the worship of the Christians are very well known.

Trajan's answer is brief and business-like:

My dear Secundus, you have acted quite correctly in deciding the cases of those who have been brought before you as Christians. No general rule can be made which can establish a fixed form of procedure. They are not to be hunted out. If they are charged and convicted, they are to be punished; but if anyone says that he is not a Christian, and makes the fact certain by invoking our gods, no matter what the suspicions about his past, he is to win immunity by his repentance. Anonymous charges are never to be received; they are of very objectionable precedent, contrary to the spirit and practice of our age.

Our judgement about the meaning of these letters must depend largely upon our view of the alleged institute of Nero. Some have seen in it a confirmation of the opinion that the legal position of the Christians was simply that of brigands. But another explanation is possible. Trajan had determined to disband all unlicensed associations in the province; some of them had been used to foment political disaffection, and he had ordered Pliny to suppress them all. He would not even allow the hundred and fifty firemen of Nicomedia to form a union. Now, it is certain that Pliny regarded the Christian congregations as unlicensed associations. He had tortured two deaconesses, believing them, it seems, to be slaves belonging to an association. He was therefore bound to order the congregations to disband, and to inform the Christians that the penalty for refusing to do so was death.

If we read Pliny's letter between the lines, he is suggesting to the emperor that his rule against associations might advantageously be relaxed in this case. Trajan refuses to make any concession of this kind; but he shows Pliny how he may reduce the injustice to a minimum. Anonymous accusers are not to be listened





**A PRE-CHRISTIAN BASILICA**

This remarkable pagan temple was accidentally discovered in 1917 fifty feet below the surface near the Porta Maggiore, Rome. It dates from the first century, and in all its features it is a practical anticipation of the later Christian basilica.

*Courtesy of Mrs Strong*

to; and a governor not unfavourably disposed to the Christians might remind informers that they were risking a prosecution for calumny. There were probably very few more executions in Bithynia-Pontus after Trajan's letter was delivered.

Our next document is a rescript of Hadrian, Trajan's immediate successor, to Minucius Fundanus, proconsul of Syria, about A.D. 124. It is found in Greek appended to Justin's First Apology, and in Eusebius; Rufinus gives a Latin version, which looks like the original document. There is no reason to doubt its genuineness. It runs as follows:

I have received a letter addressed to me by your distinguished predecessor, Serenus Granianus, and I do not like to pass over his report in silence, lest innocent people be troubled and an opportunity given to malicious accusers to extort blackmail. Therefore if the provincials plainly desire to support this petition of theirs against the Christians, by bringing a charge against them before the court, I do not forbid them to take this course; but I do not allow them to make use of popular demands and clamour. It is much more just for you to

examine the charges if anyone comes forward as accuser. Therefore, if anyone brings an accusation, and proves that the persons named are doing anything unlawful, you are to adapt the penalties to suit the crimes; but you are to look to this carefully—if anyone maliciously brings false charges against any of these people you are to visit him with severer punishments in proportion to his wickedness.

This rescript introduced no change in the legal status of Christians; it is, to my thinking, inconsistent with the theory that since the time of Nero the Christians had been merely outlaws, 'like brigands.' The fact that Hadrian was an 'honorary member of all religions' may have made him brandish the threat of penalties for calumny against informers; but he did not change any standing principle. He only saw that mob prejudice against the Christians was so strong that the magistrates must exert themselves to procure for them fair play.

Polycarp was martyred in the reign of Antoninus Pius, who is said to have been a good emperor; but his annals, by an historical accident, are almost a blank. The executions of Christians at Rome, ordered by the urban prefect Lollius Urbicus, cannot have been unknown to him. In the reign of his successor, the saintly Marcus Aurelius, occurred the atrocious treatment of nearly fifty Christians at Lugdunum (Lyons).

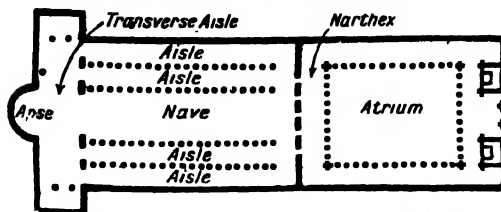
The Christians by this time had begun to compile 'Acta Martyrum' records of Deeds of the Martyrs, and the martyrdoms, even if not more frequent, were more likely to be recorded for posterity. There is no change of policy to notice in this reign, nor in that of Antoninus Pius; but we may observe that the persecutions had now for the first time spread to the West. Augustine says that at this period 'Vigellius Saturninus was the first to turn the sword against us [in Africa].' The outbreak at Lugdunum seems to have been an abominable act of lawless cruelty on the part of the legate, the motive being to please the mob. Christians were ferreted out, and condemned, not to the penalties specified in the rescript, but to be thrown to the beasts, under no charge except that of being

Christians. The emperor was known to be an upholder of pagan orthodoxy, but there is no evidence that he introduced any changes in procedure. Tertullian does not speak of him as one of the chief persecutors. The time had not yet come when the Roman government began to fear the Church as an 'imperium in imperio'; the plain fact is that the scattered Churches were still too small and too loosely organized to be a danger of this kind.

Towards the end of the second century we find a new tone of confidence in the writings of the Christians. Tertullian, in a well known and doubtless highly rhetorical passage, cries :

We are of yesterday, but we have filled your whole world, cities, islands, country towns, even the camps, the tribes, the boards of judges, the palace, the senate, the bar. We have left you only your temples.

Regular churches were now built, and we never hear of a congregation being netted while at worship. The later basilica was an adaptation of a Roman gentleman's house, and we may suppose that the houses of several wealthy Christians were used for divine service. On what legal tenure these unrecognized societies held their buildings we do not know; the authorities knew of their existence and did not interfere with them.



PLAN OF OLD S. PETER'S, ROME

This basilica was founded by Constantine in 306 and was destroyed in the fifteenth century to make room for the present cathedral. The colonnaded atrium was 235 feet in length, and the church itself 380 feet long.



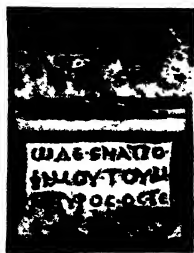
TYPE OF CHRISTIAN BASILICA

Christian basilicas were adapted from the Roman private house. A typical example is S. Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, which dates from the fifth century and is the oldest Christian basilica extant. The floor is marble-flagged and the nave flanked by marble columns with rude acanthus capitals.

*Photo, Alinari*

At Alexandria a school of Christian scholarship and philosophy was growing up; the relations between the students of the Catechetical School and those who attended the lectures of pagan professors, like Ammonius Saccas, seem to have been quite amicable. Christianity had become socially respectable.

Nevertheless, we hear of sporadic tortures and executions; Clement of Alexandria, probably with much exaggeration, says that 'we see every day before our eyes martyrs roasted, crucified, beheaded.' The 'peace of the Church' between Commodus and Valerian was no unbroken peace. Strangely enough, Egypt, which had hitherto almost escaped, became the chief scene of persecution in the reign of Severus. The father of the great



ΥΜΕΙΣ ΟΙ ΓΕΝΝΑΔΕΙΟΙ ΥΠΑΤΗΡ ΚΑΙ  
ΠΟΤΝΙΑ ΜΗΤΗΡ  
ΕΞΕΤΕΛΕΣΑΝ ΟΓΑΡΓΕ  
ΝΟΜΑΤΡΗΝ ΤΑΚΑ ΧΗΣΕΝ  
ΠΟΙΜΕΝΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΟ ΕΚΚΙΝΟΙ  
ΡΟΙ ΡΑ ΕΙΗΝ ΓΑΡ ΑΝΕΤΑΗ  
ΟΙΚΤΙΟΝ ΘΗΚΩΝ ΚΑΙ  
ΔΥΣΜΕΝΕΩΝ ΑΝΟΕΙΩΝ  
ΗΤΙΟC ΩΝ ΕΤΑΙΩΝ ΜΙΝ ΥΝΘΑ  
ΔΕΙΟC ΔΕ ΤΕ ΑΕΥΤΑ

#### EVASIONS OF ROMAN VIGILANCE

The small reliquary (left) contains bones of Trophimus, martyred in 281, with an inscription forbidding their desecration. The epitaph (right) has a carefully veiled allusion to the martyrdom of one Gennadius. Such caution was due to the Roman government's prohibition of public veneration of Christian martyrs' remains.

*From Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*

Origen, Leonides, was put to death. Clement, the head of the Catechetical School, had to fly for his life, and after an interval was succeeded by Origen. In Africa a group of Montanists suffered; their courage and sufferings are perpetuated in the moving 'Acta' of Perpetua and her friends.

Meanwhile, the Empire seemed to be falling to pieces. Puppet emperors were set up and murdered; for a brief space the imperial purple was worn by El-Gabal (Elagabalus), a Syrian boy who established the religion of the Syrian sun god in Rome itself. Alexander Severus showed respect to all creeds in his palace chapel he set up busts of Apollonius of Tyana, Christ, Abraham and Orpheus. He caused the Golden Rule, in a negative form, to be engraved on the walls of his palace. He recognized the Christians of Rome as a corporation capable of holding property, and awarded to them a site claimed by the guild of innkeepers, on the ground that it was better that God should be worshipped there, no matter how, than that it should belong to the owners of taverns.

The barbarian Maximin, a Goth, who was emperor for a short time (235-238), is inscribed on the roll of persecutors; but he does not seem to have done much to deserve it. Nevertheless, a new period of persecution was at hand. There was a great patriotic reaction; all good Romans felt that it was now or never, if they wished to save the Empire. In 249 this party gained a champion when Trajanus Decius was made emperor. Decius was a man of fine character, a good

soldier and a constitutionalist, whose one object was to restore the virtues and the glory of the Roman name. In order to do this, he thought that the most necessary step was to root out the Christian religion.

At the end of 249 an edict the first edict against the Christians—was issued, perhaps in the joint names of Decius and of Valerian as censor.

The wording of it is not known; but it must have required all persons to sacrifice before a certain day. The penalties were, in case of contumacy, torture and death, but it was not desired to make many martyrs. Pope Fabian was executed; Babylas of Antioch and Alexander of Jerusalem died in prison. Origen was imprisoned and tortured, and died from the results of his maltreatment. Dionysius of Alexandria was rescued by the country people. As might have been expected after a

#### First edict against the Christians

there were very many apostasies. Large numbers bought 'libelli'—certificates of orthodox paganism, which were drawn up and signed by the suspects themselves, and countersigned by the local commissioners. A few of these have been found in Egypt. Decius was killed in battle against the Goths in the summer of 251, and for a short time the persecution died down; in fact it languished from the day when the emperor left Rome for the camp in the autumn of 250.

Valerian, who had been censor under Decius, did not interfere with the Church for the first three years of his reign. It seems that his hands were forced by the desperate condition of the Empire, which was being ravaged by numerous hordes of Germans, while the Moors were invading Roman Africa, and the Persians, who had displaced the Parthians as the great power in the East, were threatening the Asiatic frontiers. A very destructive plague was more than decimating the harassed population. The emperor thought that

religious unity must be enforced—an antiquated notion which did not seem absurd to a patriotic Roman. Valerian modelled his edict on the old 'senatus-consultum de Bacchanalibus' (decree of the Senate concerning Festivals of Bacchus). 'All persons not following the Roman religion must conform to the Roman ceremonies.'

The Christians were forbidden to assemble, even in the catacombs. Sixtus, bishop of Rome, defied this edict by ostentatiously transferring

**Prohibition of all Christian assemblies** the alleged remains of S. Peter and S. Paul from the Vatican and

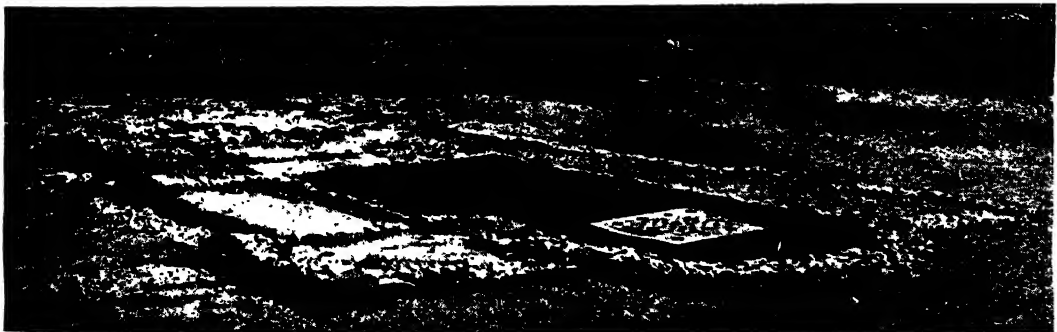
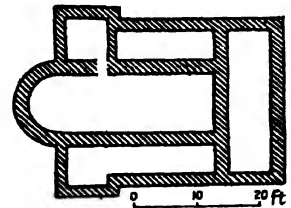
the Ostian Road to the catacombs. This led to a second and more severe edict, under which Sixtus and four of his deacons were executed. The most illustrious Christian of the time, Thascius Cyprianus of Carthage, was beheaded in Africa. But the number of martyrs was not very great; the object of the government was to destroy the priesthood and close or destroy the churches. This persecution ended like that of Decius by the disappearance of its chief instigator. Valerian was made prisoner by the Persians in 260, and nothing more was heard of him. His son Gallienus stopped the persecution, and the Church had rest till Diocletian made the final attempt to root out Christianity.

There is no doubt that the Christians increased rapidly in numbers and in power during the forty years which

followed the edict of toleration issued by Gallienus. Churches can be traced from Britain to Pontus and Armenia, and even within the domains of the Persian king. Christianity drew converts from all classes from the imperial family to the slaves; but it was probably strongest in the middle class. It is reasonable to suppose that in all strata it attracted the best moral elements, except among patriotic conservatives, who thought it no accident that crushing disasters had fallen upon the Empire 'in Christian times.' But it also included many weak-kneed adherents, who were ready to fall away at the first threat of danger.

To the modern historian the attempt of Diocletian and his colleagues to root out a religion so powerful and having adherents so enthusiastic must seem the very height of folly. Only partial explanations of their policy can be found. In the first place, the Empire was now becoming thoroughly Asiatic in type. Diocletian was as autocratic as a tsar or Turkish sultan, and his subjects were bound hand and foot under an iron bureaucracy. A government of this type finds it difficult to tolerate a great independent Church.

The natural arrangement is Caesaropapism—a privileged state church as the right arm of the autocracy. This was to be



**FOUNDATIONS AND PLAN OF BRITAIN'S FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

Silchester in north Hampshire occupies the site of the Roman town Calleva Atrebatum, and here in 1892 excavation revealed the remains of a fourth-century basilica, the oldest Christian church of which remains have been found in Britain. The building comprised a nave thirty feet long, two aisles five feet wide ending in rather wider chambers or quasi-transepts, an apse at the west end and a porch across the east end. In the apse was a mosaic panel in red, black and white.

*Photo, W. Adams*

the solution in the East, with Christianity in the privileged position.

But in the time of Diocletian (he reigned from 284 to 305) the Christians were still in a minority, and they were not considered the most patriotic or public-spirited part of the population. Universal conformity was desirable, and must be conformity to the old state religion. To allow the Church to increase in power and in centralisation was to permit a rival government within the state, which might at any time become politically dangerous. Besides this, the rough soldiers who engineered the last persecution were really stupid. Their attempt to regulate the finances of the Empire by arbitrarily fixing prices is evidence that they understood very little what the limits of legislation are. As to the cruelties which were practised during the persecution, we have to remember that the Empire was no longer a highly civilized state. The influx of barbarians

had brutalised the provinces, and Italy itself. The penal code tended to become more and more ferocious. 'The avenging flames,' a penalty very rarely inflicted in earlier times, became the favourite threat against all offenders with whom the state found it difficult to deal.

Diocletian tried to strengthen the supreme power by making Maximian a separate Augustus in the West, and by appointing two 'Caesars' as sub-emperors. Constantius was to administer Gaul, and Galerius, a brutal soldier, the East. For twenty years (284-303) the Christians had very little cause for complaint. Diocletian's first persecution was directed not against them, but against the Manichaeans, who, no doubt, were specially obnoxious from their connexion with Persia. We do not know what at last induced him to draw the sword against the Church. The persecution began by the destruction of the great church at

Nicomedia, then the imperial residence. Two attempts to burn down the emperor's palace quickly followed, and were not unnaturally attributed to the Christians. This was in February, 303.

The edict of February, 303, ordered the churches to be destroyed and the sacred books burnt, but there were to be no martyrs. But other edicts followed; and when Diocletian was incapacitated by illness, Maximian began to order executions wholesale, while in the East Galerius and Maximian butchered a very large number of Christians. The atrocities seem to have been worst in Egypt, where as many as a hundred persons were massacred at the same time, and where every kind of torture and mutilation was practised. The number of the victims must have been many thousands, but no estimate can be made. The regents behaved like savages, not only to the Christians, but to each other. Licinius in the East



A GALLERY IN THE CATACOMBS

The catacombs consist of a network of subterranean galleries executed in the second, granular, layer of the tufa of which the Campagna is composed. The galleries average eight feet in height and three to five feet in width and the 'loculi' or graves lie in tiers along the wall on both sides.

From Wilpert, 'Le Pitture delle Catacombe Romane'

murdered the wife and daughter of Diocletian, the wife, son and daughter of Maximin, the son of Galerius and the son of Severus. We are not dealing with civilized rulers.

The victories of Constantine, won under the banner of Christ, brought toleration to the Christians, and nobody seems to have doubted that toleration meant complete victory. But public opinion had already revolted against the persecution. The Christians were no longer hated, and the average pagan was disgusted at the infliction of hideous cruelties upon his inoffensive neighbours. The idea of a Christian emperor, which had seemed incredible to Tertullian, caused no great surprise now. Within a few months after the battle of the Mulvian Bridge in 312—an account of the events leading to it is found in Chronicle XII—we find Constantine attended by a confidential private chaplain, Hosius, bishop of Cordova.

Constantine was not baptised till his last illness; he retained the title of pontifex maximus, and for some time

allowed pagan emblems to appear on his coins. But he granted indemnities to Christians who

had suffered during the persecution, and exempted the clergy from burdensome taxes and obligations—a concession, it is true, already made to some pagan priests and to members of the learned professions. He ordered work to cease on Sundays; he sanctioned legacies to the churches. In these and other ways he showed his favour to the Church. The New Rome on the Bosphorus was to be a Christian city, and Constantine did not scruple to despoil famous temples, even those at Delphi, of their artistic treasures to adorn it. It was soon plain, after the defeat of Licinius in September, 324, made Constantine sole master of the Roman world, that to renounce the old gods was the surest way to his favour.

There was not very much opposition; a pagan reaction was to come later, and it was short-lived. Few pagans had any wish to die for their faith, though many of them made very indifferent Christians. The emperor himself was a very indifferent



#### EARLY CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS ON GEMS

Before the official toleration of Christianity artists confined themselves to symbols. Most common are the Good Shepherd; the Dove, symbolising the soul; the Fish, representing the initials of the Greek words for Jesus Christ, Son of God. Saviour; and the Anchor, symbolising hope.

*British Museum*

convert, though we need not doubt that he was, as Duchesne says, 'a convinced Christian, lax and with a restricted conception of theology.' One may forgive him for the deaths of Maximian and Licinius, pretenders and inconvenient rivals, but hardly for those of his son Crispus, the son of Licinius, and his wife Fausta. He was not such a ruffian as Galerius, Maximin and Licinius, and was a far abler man; but not much more can be said in his favour.

So at last the Church had peace and victory, and the glorious period of suffering and faithfulness even to death was at an end. The time was at hand when paganism lived on within the Christian Church, a paganism cleansed of its worst stains, but not of its superstitions. Christianity is a collective name which covers a great variety of religions, among which the religion of its Founder has often been obscured but never extinct. It was probably at its purest before the sunshine of imperial favour began to shine upon it. But no institution which has had to struggle for its existence against bitter enemies escapes being hardened and narrowed in the process.

# TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XIII

A.D.		A.D.	
330	Dedication of Constantinople.	398	Suppression of Gildo in Africa.
331	Gothic campaign.	402	Alaric invades Italy; checked by Stilicho.
336	Death of Tiridates. Sapor II seizes Armenia.	403	Alaric retires after defeat at Pollentia.
337	Constantine, while projecting Persian war, dies.		Ravenna becomes the imperial headquarters.
	Division of the Empire between his three sons: Constantine (west), Constans (middle), Constantius (east). Execution of other princes of the blood except the children Gallus and Julian.	404	Martyrdom of Telemachus ends gladiatorial shows.
338	Constantius goes to the Persian war. First unsuccessful siege of Nisibis by Sapor.	407	Revolt of Constantine III (Briton), who withdraws the troops from Britain to set up a Gallic empire. ('Evacuation of Britain.')
340	Constans and Constantine at war. Battle of Aquileia; death of Constantine.	408	Honorius puts Stilicho to death.
344	Persian victory at Singara.		Theodosius II (aged seven) succeeds Arcadius.
346	Second unsuccessful siege of Nisibis by Sapor.	409	Alaric invades Italy and puts Rome to ransom.
350	Third siege of Nisibis. Owing to incursions of the Massagetae in Transoxiana, Sapor makes truce with Constantius.	409	Alaric proclaims Attalus emperor.
	Magnentius murders Constans and becomes emperor in the West; Vetranio proclaimed on Danube. On appearance of Constantius Vetranio resumes allegiance.	410	Fall of Attalus. Alaric sacks Rome, but dies.
351	Magnentius defeated at sanguinary battle of Mursa. Misrule of Gallus, left as Caesar in the East.	411	Athaulf succeeds Alaric as king of Visigoths.
352	Italy recovered. Magnentius in Gaul.		Constantine III crushed by Constantius.
353	Final defeat and death of Magnentius.	412	Athaulf withdraws from Italy to Narbonne.
354	Ignominious execution of Gallus. Julian at Athens.	413	India: Kumaragupta (to 455); great literary era - the Sakuntala of Kalidasa.
356	Julian dispatched as Caesar to Gaul.		Revolt and collapse of Heraclius.
	War with Alemanni, Quadi and Sarmatians. Military achievements of Julian.	414	Athaulf attacks the barbarians in Spain.
357	Insolent challenge from Sapor.		Pulcheria regent for her brother Theodosius II.
359	Sapor invades Mesopotamia. Constantius goes to the East.	415	Wallia succeeds Athaulf
360	The Gallic army forces Julian to revolt. His march down the Danube to Moesia.	416	Constantius the patrician marries Placidia.
361	Constantius dies. Julian the Apostate emperor.	417	Visigoths establish themselves in Aquitaine.
362	Pagan reaction. Christians forbidden to teach. Julian's advance against the Persians.	425	Honorius dies. Valentinian III (son of Constantius and Placidia, who becomes regent).
363	Disaster and death of Julian. Retreat of the army which proclaims Jovian emperor. Humiliating peace with Persia. Renewed toleration decreed.	427	Revolt of Boniface in Africa.
364	Jovian nominates Valentinian I and dies.	428	S. Augustine's De Civitate Dei
	Valentinian associates his brother Valens as Eastern Augustus and takes the West himself. Permanent duality of the Empire inaugurated.	429	The Vandals, invited by Boniface, migrate under Geiseric from Spain to Africa, which they proceed to conquer.
366	Damasus pope. Social and political influences become a feature of papal elections.	433	Aetius patrician in Italy
367	Valentinian sends his son Gratian as Augustus to Gaul. Theodosius the elder in Britain.	434	Rugila king of the Huns dies; Attila succeeds.
368	War of Valens with the Goths, whose power has been consolidated under Hermanaric the Amal.	439	Geiseric takes Carthage. Vandal fleet dominant.
369	Peace with the Goths.	440	Geiseric invades Sicily, but is bought off.
369-377	Subjugation of Ostrogoths by Hun invasion.	441	Attila crosses Danube and invades Thrace.
374	Pannonian war of Valentinian.	443	Attila makes terms with Theodosius.
	Ambrose bishop of Milan.	447	Attila's second invasion.
375	Death of Valentinian. Accession of Gratian, who associates his infant brother, Valentinian II, at Milan. First emperor to refuse the pagan office of Pontifex Maximus.	449	Attila's second peace; he receives a subsidy.
	Theodosius the elder in Africa.		Hengist and Horsa in Britain (traditional).
	India: Chandragupta III Vikramaditya.	450	Marcian succeeds Theodosius; stops Hun tribute.
376	Execution of elder and retirement of younger Theodosius.	451	Attila invades Gaul; is heavily defeated by Aetius and Theodoric I the Visigoth at Châlons.
377	Valens receives and settles Visigoths in Moesia.	452	Attila invades Italy, but is persuaded by Pope Leo the Great to spare Rome and retire.
378	Gratian defeats Alemanni. Rising of Visigoths. Valens killed in disaster at Adrianople.	453	Attila dies. Theodoric II king of Visigoths.
379	Gratian nominates the younger Theodosius as successor to Valens.	454	Overthrow of the Hun power by the subject Ostrogoths, Gepidae, etc., at battle of the Nedao.
382	Treaty of Theodosius with Visigoths.		Murder of Aetius by Valentinian.
383	Revolt of Maximus in Britain; flight and death of Gratian. Theodosius recognizes Maximus in the West and Valentinian II at Milan.	455	Murder of Valentinian; and of Maximus his murderer. Geiseric sacks Rome, carrying off Eudoxia.
384	China: Break-up under two dynasties, Sung and Wei.		Avitus proclaimed emperor by the Visigoths.
386	Revolt of Gildo in Africa.		India: Skandagupta (last of great Guptas) to 480
387	Theodosius crushes Maximus; makes Arbogast the Frank master of the soldiers to Valentinian.	456	Domination of East and West by the respective masters of the soldiers, Aspar the Arian and Ricimer the Sueve.
392	Murder of Valentinian. Arbogast sets up Eugenius.	457	Ricimer deposes Avitus, makes Majorian emperor.
394	Fall of Arbogast and Eugenius. Theodosius makes his younger son Honorius Western Augustus, with the Vandal Stilicho master of soldiers.	460	Marcian dies; Aspar makes Leo I emperor.
395	Theodosius dies; Arcadius and Honorius emperors		Destruction of Majorian's fleet at Cartagena.
396	Alaric the Visigoth overruns Balkan peninsula.	461	Deposition and death of Majorian. Severus emperor.
397	Alaric, checked by Stilicho, is given Illyria. The Confessions of S. Augustine.	465	Severus dies; Ricimer rules as patrician.
			Fall of Aspar.
		466	Euric, king of Visigoths, begins conquest of Spain.
		467	Leo appoints Anthemius Western Augustus.
		468	Leo sends great expedition under Basiliscus to crush Geiseric, who destroys it.
		472	Ricimer deposes Anthemius and sets up Olybrius.
			Death of Ricimer and Olybrius.
		473	Glycerius Western emperor
		474	Julius Nepos Western emperor.
			Leo I dies and is succeeded by his infant grandson Leo II, who dies and is succeeded by his father Zeno the Isaurian.
		475	Romulus Augustulus last Western emperor.
			Usurpation of Basiliscus at Constantinople; Zeno escapes to Asia.
			Theodoric the Amal becomes king of Ostrogoths.
		476	Odoacer the Scirian, commander and elected king of the German troops in Italy, deposes Romulus and resolves to rule independently, but nominally as the viceroy of the Roman Augustus at Constantinople.
			End of the dual Roman Empire of East and West; but the allegiance of the West is nominal.



## Chronicle XIII

# THE SUNDERING EMPIRE:

A.D. 330—476

**I**N the days of Constantine the Great, one vast political organization covered every part of the civilized world that was recognized as civilized by the citizens of the Roman Empire. The Empire held its marches against the barbarians of the north and the Persians in the east; but upon them it could make no effective counter-impression. And their pressure westward and southward increased continually because in the west and the south lay wealth for the winning, but also because from the farther north, and now from the farther east as well, they were themselves subjected to pressure by migrant hordes. For the nomads from central Asia, whom the Chinese called Hsiung-nu and the Europeans Huns, were streaming into Europe past the Caspian.

### Organization of Constantine's Empire

**T**HE fact which the third century had proved past dispute was that the Empire was too large for control by one man. Constantine did not share his authority as Diocletian had done; but he retained Diocletian's quadruple partition, with a civil governor—a prefect in entire charge of justice and finance, but with no military authority—in each governorship or prefecture, directly responsible to the emperor but to no one else. The two capitals also, Rome and Constantinople, had each a separate prefect. The areas corresponded to the divisions made by Diocletian. The whole was subdivided into twelve 'dioceses,' each under a 'vicar' or 'vice-prefect, immediately responsible to the prefect, and these again into one hundred and sixteen presidencies or provinces correspondingly subordinated.

Necessarily there was a host of minor, but well paid, officials, and each of the higher officials was provided with a huge secretarial staff; the expense was enormous and bore very heavily on the taxpayers. Whether the machinery worked ill

or worked well at a given time in a given place, it had at least the advantage that automatically it always remained working.

On the military side, now completely severed from the civil, the same principle was adopted. The armies in each of the four territorial divisions were under two general officers, 'magistri,' masters, of the horse and foot respectively; under the eight generals were thirty-five 'duces,' dukes, of whom some ten enjoyed the superior title of 'comites,' companions or counts. In both services each grade had its own title of dignity, corresponding to the 'excellency,' 'most noble,' 'honourable,' and so on, of modern high officialdom. And in both the subordinate, immediately responsible to his immediate superior, was ultimately responsible to the emperor.

Nevertheless, we shall see that before thirty years had passed after the death of Constantine a reversion to the system as at first inaugurated by Diocletian was so far imposed by circumstances that the Empire was again parted into East and West, and was never effectively reunited; and further that the Christian Church, closely associated with the state, as we have seen in page 2128, by the action of Constantine, was similarly parting into Eastern or Greek and Western or Latin.

### Death and Successors of Constantine

**A**T the close of his long reign Constantine was summoned east by the activities of the most dangerous of all the Persian kings, Sapor II (310–381), sometimes called the Great. It would seem that he was at least contemplating a campaign when he fell ill and died at Nicomedia (Diocletian's eastern capital) in A.D. 337 at the age of sixty-four, in the fourteenth year of his reign as sole emperor, and the thirty-first since his accession as Caesar. Almost at the last he had been baptised; nevertheless the customary divine honours were bestowed on the departed Augustus.



Constantine had destined three sons and two nephews to the succession. Two of his sons, Constans and Constantine, the youngest and the eldest, were absent. With the consent of the third, Constantius, the other members of the imperial family except two young cousins were slaughtered by the soldiery. The Empire was by agreement parted between the three sons, Constantine taking the west, Constans the centre and Constantius the east. The eldest of the three new emperors was one and twenty; their two cousins, Gallus and Julian, nephews of the great Constantine, were in 337 aged twelve and six respectively.

#### Renewed Conflict with Persia

FROM the outset Constantius was very thoroughly occupied in coping with the activities of the Persian Sapor; but in a short time the two other brothers were quarrelling and then actually fighting over the possession of Illyria. The elder, Constantine, was slain in an ambush near Aquileia (340), and the younger, Constans, was recognized throughout the western dominion. Ten years later his reign, too, was brought to a violent end.

Meanwhile Constantius was fighting with Sapor, a much more interesting personality than any of the sons of Constantine. Born in 310, he was already a crowned king when he first saw the light, the ceremony having been performed after his father's death during his mother's pregnancy. Following the peace of Diocletian, won by the arms of Galerius, more than thirty years had passed without actual collision between the Roman and Persian empires, though a clash was impending at the moment of the death of Constantine, when Sapor was twenty-seven. For Sapor II, like Ardashir and Sapor I, conceived that all Asia, with Egypt, belonged of right to the Persian Empire. In the long years of his minority nothing of note had befallen; but as soon as he came to man's estate he showed vigour, smiting the Arab enemies who had taken advantage of his youth, yet dealing so temperately with their tribesmen that he was accounted a protector rather than a conqueror.

The opportunity of challenging Rome was provided by the condition of Armenia, following the death of the old king Tiridates, who had been reinstated by the peace of Diocletian. That monarch had become a Christian. His zeal for the faith did not find favour with the Armenian nobles, though the personal prestige of Tiridates kept them quiet during his lifetime; but on his death a conspiracy ejected his youthful heir Chosroes. A persecution was set on foot; the rebels appealed to Sapor and the Christians appealed to Constantius. The full extent of Sapor's ambitions was not yet apparent; but he was resolved at least to recover those provinces on the Persian side of the Tigris which had been ceded to Diocletian, and the suzerainty of Armenia, so often a bone of contention between the two great powers. His forces poured into Mesopotamia.

Roman troops—troops, that is, of the imperial army in the East—marched into Armenia, and restored Chosroes to his throne, but with little advantage; for that prince desired only to live in undisturbed luxury, purchased by submission to the energetic Sapor. Armenia was finally absorbed into the Persian Empire, though the old Arsacid dynasty remained on the throne for nearly a century more.

#### Exhausting War in Mesopotamia

THE real seat of the struggle, however, was in Mesopotamia, where the war raged for some years without any decisive result. Both sides called into action hosts of Arab horsemen, who raided and wrought havoc far and wide; nine pitched battles were enumerated, in which, by admission of the Roman historians, the advantage generally lay with the Persians. Constantius himself was twice present; but it is safe to assume that his officers, not he, were responsible for the military direction. A most notable feature was the stubborn defence of the main frontier fortress of Nisibis, on the capture of which Sapor three times concentrated huge forces, to be three times repulsed after sieges of from two to three months' duration. Even after the third repulse the attack would have been renewed; but

## The Sundering Empire

simultaneously there came an urgent call to the west upon the Roman emperor, and to the east upon the Persian; and each could regard with relief a suspension of the exhausting hostilities in the Mesopotamian debatable land.

Nearly nine centuries previously Cyrus, the original founder of the Persian Empire, had fallen in battle with the Massagetae, the Scythians beyond the Oxus. The same name is given to the Scythian tribes whose irruption now summoned the remote heir of Cyrus to the defence of Persia on her eastern instead of her western frontier; a part, no doubt, of that general ferment among the nomads of central Asia which was about to flagellate Europe with the scourge of the Huns.

THE West summoned Constantius, because Constans was dead and a new emperor had assumed the purple. The proceedings so familiar in the history of the Roman Empire had been repeated. Constans after his brother's death conducted

himself as an irresponsible tyrant. He forfeited the loyalty which was at first given to him because he was his father's son; what remained of it was undermined by the scheming general at his own headquarters in Gaul; and when Magnentius was acclaimed by the legions while the emperor was away hunting, Constans could only flee for his life, to be overtaken and slain on the Spanish coast. Of the three prefectures of the Empire which had acknowledged Constans, two, the Gallic and the Italian, did not hesitate to acknowledge Magnentius (350). In the third, the Illyrian, the soldiery set up their own general, Vetranio. The two new emperors made haste to come to terms and to proffer their equal amity to the surviving son of Constantine in the East.

Constantius, opportunely relieved on the side of Persia, dealt not unskillfully with the situation. Reconciliation with his brother's murderer was out of the question; it was no less impossible to fight Magnentius and Vetranio at once.



### SUCCESSORS OF CONSTANTINE UPON THE IMPERIAL THRONE

All the sons of Constantine the Great by his second wife, Fausta, are featured on the three medallions on the left, Constantine II and Constantius II above, and Constans below; on the reverse of the lower medallion the three brothers are presented together, each holding the sceptre that devolved upon him on his father's death in 337. The upper medallion on the right bears the bust of Magnentius, to whose disloyalty Constans owed his death, and below is the portrait of Valentinian I.

*British Museum and (bottom right) Bernoulli, 'Römische Ikonographie'*

While he refused to treat with Magnentius, he succeeded not merely in detaching Vetrano, but in persuading him to return to his allegiance. With the army of Illyria now at his back, he could proceed to the critical conflict with Magnentius, which was decided in the sanguinary battle of Mursa in Pannonia, where more than 50,000 of the best troops of the imperial armies were left on the field of slaughter, or drowned in the Drave river. Mursa was not the end; Magnentius still strove to make head, but his troops gradually deserted him; and when those that were yet left with him were on the point of delivering him

conciliatory terms, to meet him in the West. When the meeting took place, in Pannonia, short was his shrift. He died ignominiously by the sword of the executioner (354). Save Constantius himself, the only surviving male descendant of the father of Constantine the Great was Julian, the younger brother of Gallus.

Constantius remained in the West for three years more. Julian, now twenty-three, a youth of high promise but wholly without practical experience, was withdrawn from his seclusion in the east and was permitted to pursue at Athens the literary and philosophic studies to which he was devoted, until Constantius was



**GUERRILLA WARFARE WITH SCYTHIAN RAIDERS IN THE CRIMEA**

Wherever they dwelt, whether as nomads or as more or less settled agriculturists, the Scythians were troublesome neighbours. This tomb painting from Kertch—the ancient Panticapaeum on the Cimmerian Bosphorus—depicts a frequent incident: a Panticapaeian landowner fighting a troop of Scythian raiders from the Crimean lowlands. The landowner is supported by a well-equipped little army of friends and serfs, and one of the invaders already lies with his horse dead upon the field.

*From Rostovtzeff, 'Ancient Decorative Paintings.'*

to his rival, he chose rather to die by his own hand (353).

Before marching to the West, Constantius had liberated Gallus, the elder of his two young cousins, from what had practically been captivity, to assume the position of Caesar in the East. As prince of the East in the absence of Constantius, he displayed all the familiar vices of an irresponsible tyrant. The reprimands which reached him from the emperor only goaded him into reckless and unpardonable violence to the emissaries, who themselves addressed him with intolerable and calculated insolence; he was certainly planning treason on the customary lines; but he did not dare to resist a summons from the victorious Constantius, couched though it was in smooth and

persuaded, very much against Julian's will, to raise him to the dignity of Caesar and the sovereignty of transalpine Europe, while he himself returned to the East, where the emperor's presence was becoming necessary. The fact that the Empire was too large to be managed without viceroys was once more proving itself; especially since Sapor, having dealt successfully with the Massagetae, was back on the borders with ambitions renewed. The barbarians, moreover, were again swarming over the upper Danube.

So Constantius occupied himself with successful campaigns in that region while his lieutenants in Asia were intriguing with Sapor; who imagined that the time had come for him to assert his claims to the whole empire of Asia. It was impossible not

to take up the challenge he issued. Nevertheless, in 359 the Persians would have swept Mesopotamia, if Sapor had not been piqued into pausing to reduce the fortress city of Amida on the upper Tigris, where his army was depleted by the stubborn valour of the besieged. Amida fell at last, and its inhabitants were duly massacred or enslaved; but Mesopotamia was saved and Sapor's field force was withdrawn.

Meanwhile the student Julian had been proving himself a capable and valiant man of action in Gaul and on the Gallic frontier. The two boys, Gallus and his brother, had been cut off from all natural companionships and had been allowed only a very restricted liberty, but their education had by no means been neglected. On Gallus it had little enough effect; but Julian imbibed a passion for learning and an enthusiasm for the great writers of antiquity which filled his soul with lofty ideals and with a repulsion for Christianity as it was presented to him by his Christian preceptors.

A strong man was needed in Gaul; for in the recent civil war Magnentius had called to his aid hosts of the Franks and Alemanni, who promptly assumed the rôle not of auxiliaries but of conquerors. Despite his inexperience and his academic predilections, Julian proved himself equal to the emergency, winning battles against heavy odds with distinguished personal valour, and restoring law and order in the devastated districts; till the reputation he was winning aroused jealousy



**JULIAN THE APOSTATE**

Owing to his declared paganism Julian (331-363) has been much misrepresented. Actually he was a moral and intellectual man and a brilliant writer. The ascription of this statue to him is supported by the coin above.

*The Louvre and British Museum*



in Constantius, whose own credit was being not at all enhanced by his operations in the East, either as soldier or as ruler. Jealousy rapidly developed into suspicion and probably into secret designs against the life of the younger man. Constantius ordered the immediate dispatch of the best of the legions of Julian to the Mesopotamian front; and the legions responded by calling upon Julian to save the Empire by assuming the purple as Augustus.

For some time Julian held out loyally, but the soldiery would take no denial till he yielded, at last convinced that loyalty to the Empire was above loyalty to the emperor. Though he professed to demand only his own recognition as Western Augustus, Constantius naturally refused to look on him as anything but a rebel. When this was made clear to Julian and his legions there remained no alternative but civil war; and suddenly Julian with no more than three thousand men at his back vanished into the forests and mountains of south Germany to reappear on the lower Danube. Constantius, returning from his inglorious campaign in the East to meet the attack from the West, was taken ill in Cilicia, and died (A.D. 361). There was no civil war.

Julian the Apostate reigned for no more than two years. He bears that name because he renounced the Christianity of his earlier years and proclaimed himself the champion of the ancient gods. Less than half a century had elapsed since Christianity had ceased to be a proscribed religion. Constantine had countenanced it, favoured it, all but established it as the official religion of the Empire. It had not sought to avenge the old-time persecutions by retaliation on paganism; but in a tolerationist state it had forthwith become the religion of respectability, and was much less occupied in combating its effete opponent than with the profusion of sectarian divisions, 'heresies,' springing up within its own fold.

#### Julian a conscientious Apostate

**D**ESPITE the pronouncement of Nicaea in A.D. 325, the Arians were in higher favour with Constantine himself, and still more with Constantius, than the orthodox; and Christians levelled their fiercest denunciations at the other Christians to whom they denied the name. The teachings of the Master were too often obscured or forgotten or set at nought in the virulent dissensions of His disciples. The fruits of Christianity were not conspicuous in the lives of the rulers, orthodox or Arian, of the Christian state.

Julian, to whom in his boyhood the conventional Christianity had not been presented in an attractive light, felt nothing but repugnance for its fundamental doctrine of the Divine Logos incarnate in a Galilean carpenter's son who suffered crucifixion at the hands of the law. His philosophical studies had taught him to graft the ethical conceptions of Stoicism upon an attractively mystic interpretation of the old mythology. His method, however, of suppressing the religion he discarded was not that of persecution in the ordinary sense. He went no further than to exclude Christian teaching and teachers from the schools; while the paganism still fashionable in society gave no zealous support to a paganism founded on the rigid morality of Stoicism. His reformation collapsed of inanition with his death, two years after he initiated it.

When Constantius died in A.D. 361, Julian crossed over to Asia—his title was undisputed—and never returned to Europe. The close of his brief life—he was only thirty-two when he died—was occupied with the Persian war. A victorious campaign, in which he penetrated beyond the Tigris, ended in disaster. The army, advancing under the direction of rashly trusted guides whose aim was to lead it to destruction, was almost overwhelmed by the myriads of foes with which it suddenly found itself surrounded. Valour and skill broke every onslaught, but in the pursuit which followed the last repulse, Julian was wounded by a javelin, and was carried back to camp only to die (A.D. 363).

There was no surviving male scion of the imperial house, and Julian had named no successor. The army chose an old soldier, Jovian, who lived long enough to patch up an ignominious peace with Persia and withdraw the exhausted troops behind the Tigris. Six months after his accession Jovian too died. Again the choice of a successor lay with the soldiery, and lighted on a soldier of barbarian (Pannonian) stock and mean descent but proved capacity, Valentinian I (A.D. 364).

#### Accession of Valentinian I

**B**y his first act, the new emperor recognized the practical necessity for partition; no one man could successfully hold in his own hands for long the responsibility for both East and West. Valentinian chose for himself his native West, and made his brother Valens Augustus of the East. This time the division was permanent, though the Empire still remained nominally one.

For twelve years Valentinian ruled the West with vigour and, apart from the savage mercilessness he was wont to display towards all opposition to his will, with conspicuous justice and moderation. He had been open enough in his own opposition to the pagan zeal of Julian, but for others to emulate his own example was to court death. Nevertheless, despite his own orthodoxy, he was rigid in his insistence on equal treatment for all religions and all sects, pagans, Arians and orthodox Christians. He held the Gallic

## The Sundering Empire

frontiers with a strong hand against the swarming Franks and Alemanni whom he smote in successful campaigns beyond the Rhine, though he was never able to inflict a thoroughly crushing defeat on them. It was on a campaign against the Quadi on the upper Danube that one of those outbursts of ungovernable rage which marred his character wrought his own undoing—so men said, at least—by inducing an apoplexy which killed him.

Perhaps, however, the most significant event of Valentinian's reign is to be found in the struggle for the succession to the bishopric of Rome, the Papacy, which set Damasus in the chair of S. Peter in 366. Rival candidates were supported by rival mobs in the streets and by rival dames in Roman society in a singularly unseemly contest for the spiritual headship, in the West at least, of the now dominant faith; and the victory of Damasus over Ursicinus was the victory not of principle nor of character, but of intrigue and partisanship and successful violence; as it would have been no less had the vanquished been the victor. It meant that the highest office in the Church was the prize of ambition and the reward of intrigue.

On Valentinian's death, his elder son Gratian was at once recognized as his successor, though the emperor had discarded the mother in favour of a wife who bore him a son (Valentinian II), a four-year-old child whom Gratian associated with himself as emperor. Hitherto, all the

Augusti had bestowed an official sanction on paganism by allowing themselves to be formally invested as its high priest, 'Pontifex Maximus'; Gratian was the first who found himself unable to reconcile acceptance of the office with the profession of Christianity. Privileges had been bestowed on the Church, but without official curtailment of the current privileges attaching to what had been the state religion. The time had come when those privileges began to be withdrawn, though as yet there was no departure from the official principle of toleration. In consequence polite paganism grew restive, while the Church was becoming increasingly intolerant towards paganism.

THE reign of Valens in the East was as conspicuously feeble as that of his brother in the West was strong. In the great theological question which divided the Church, he made himself the tool rather than the partisan of the Arian party, while the defects in his character reflected those of Valentinian, as his virtues unhappily did not. The gravest mistake Valentinian made was in his appointment of the emperor of the East. The worst faults of Valens, however, were feebleness and indecision, not brutality; and to these it was due that Sapor in his old age was able to recover a complete if detested mastery over Armenia. The great disaster of the reign of Valens did not befall till after the death of Valentinian.



### ILL-FATED MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF VALENTINIAN

Valens (left) was appointed emperor of the East by his brother Valentinian I immediately upon the latter's accession in 364. A weak man and a feeble ruler, he was responsible for the admission of the Goths into the countries south of the Danube and lost his life in the war with them which forthwith ensued. Gratian (centre) and Valentinian II (right), sons of Valentinian I, divided the Western Empire after their father's death in 375. Both brothers came to a violent and untimely end.

*British Museum and (right) Bernoulli, 'Römische Ikonographie'*



**THEODOSIUS THE GREAT**

Nominated emperor of the East in 379, Theodosius dealt effectually with the Gothic menace and showed considerable diplomatic as well as military ability. His reign is memorable for the complete triumph of Christianity.

*S. Sepolero, Barletta; photo, Alinari*

About the middle of the century the widespread Gothic confederation had been extending and consolidating its sway between the Baltic in the north and the Danube and the Black Sea in the south, under the leadership of Hermanaric the Amal, whom all their tribes recognized as king. But during the same period a new and formidable foe was pouring from Asiatic into European Scythia, the flood of the terrible Huns. Now it rolled down on the Goths. Officially at least the Goths were now the friends and allies of Rome. Reeling under the shock, the Visigoths sought the aid of Valens, whose succour took the form of granting them wide lands for settlement on the hither

side of the Danube barrier. Their vast swarms, only in part disarmed, were ferried across the river by hundreds of thousands, in numbers which had been utterly under-estimated; the conditions to which they were subjected were wholly intolerable; and the host of suppliants became forthwith a massed enemy. Valens had in effect sown the dragon's teeth, and the harvest was to reap.

War then raged in the Balkans, a war so critical that Valens called upon Gratian to come to his aid. But Gratian had hardly less serious embarrassments of his own, for the Alemanni were upon him. It was not till he had won a decisively crushing victory over them that he could report himself as on the march to effect a junction with the army of the East. But Valens would not wait. In the neighbourhood of Adrianople he flung himself upon the Goths; and in the battle that followed his army was annihilated, he himself perished, and the triumph of the Goths was complete (A.D. 378).

### New Hope for the Empire in Theodosius

THE battle of Adrianople stopped the advance of Gratian. Tremendous though the disaster had been, Adrianople and the greater capital on the Bosphorus could defy the onslaughts of the Goths, who were no experts in siege warfare; but, for the young emperor, to march on the Goths would have been to court certain disaster both in the West and in the East. The Alemanni had been disposed of only for the moment. By his own or his counsellors' wisdom he made haste to appoint a new emperor in the East to take in hand the Gothic problem; and his magnanimous choice fell upon Theodosius, the son of a great captain and servant of the state on whom in Gratian's first year the intrigues of traitors had brought the undeserved penalty of treason. The son, who had already had time to show capacity, had been suffered to retire into private life; and was now raised to the purple at the age of thirty-three.

Theodosius took up his hard task with admirable skill and prudence, but no lack of courage. Hermanaric had fallen before the Gothic war began. The able



## The Sundering Empire

successor who had led the united Goths to victory died, and with his death their unity departed. Theodosius made no ambitious attempt to retrieve the position by staking the fate of the Empire on a pitched battle. He risked no great engagements; but while he struck minor blows against their divided forces he encouraged their internal divisions; his diplomacy attached some of their leaders to the Empire, for which they had an almost superstitious reverence; and in little more than four years a comparatively enduring if precarious peace was established.

Gratian meanwhile was losing the high reputation he had won. Of his courage and his private virtues there could be no question, but the appearance of high capacity may have been due to his early submission to wise direction. He abandoned the cares of state for amusements not in themselves pernicious, but undignified, which brought him into contempt with the soldiery.

Theodosius had hardly set the seal on his own reputation in 382 by his much applauded treaty with the Goths, when the army in Britain, as in the days of Carausius, renounced its allegiance to Gratian and proclaimed an emperor of its own choice, the Spaniard Maximus, who, reluctantly by his own account, accepted the dangerous honour. In 383 Maximus crossed the Channel with a great force which depleted the garrison of the island, and marched upon Lutetia (Paris), where Gratian was residing. The soldiery in Gaul refused to move. Gratian fled, but was overtaken at Lyons, where he was treacherously assassinated with or without the connivance of the British emperor.

The successful usurper had nothing to fear from the boy Valentinian II—or rather from his mother Justina—reigning at Milan. But he hastened to send an embassy to Theodosius, repudiating and condemning

the murder which had been so hastily committed in his name, but justifying his own assumption of the purple and inviting the friendly alliance of the Eastern emperor. Theodosius may well have felt that the pacification he had just effected was too precarious to warrant him in plunging the Empire into a civil war, whose result would be doubtful, though justice and honour demanded the punishment of Gratian's murderer. He contented himself with recognizing the title of Maximus in the Gauls and Britain as a third Augustus, provided that the sovereignty of Valentinian in Italy, Africa and western Illyria were unquestioned; and to those terms Maximus agreed.

But the excessive ambition of Maximus wrought his fall. Justina was unpopular because she was an Arian heretic and the West was fanatically orthodox. Maximus broke treaty and invaded Italy. Justina fled to Theodosius with Valentinian and her daughter; the emperor fell in love with the daughter and married her. The



THE 'SHIELD OF THEODOSIUS'

Theodosius is depicted at the zenith of his power on this fine piece of silver plate at Madrid. He sits enthroned, with his son Arcadius upon one hand and on the other Valentinian II, whose cause he championed against Maximus in 388 and whom he restored to authority as emperor of the West.

From *'Annales archéologiques'*



cautious policy which had at first seemed likely to prevail with him was blown to the winds; Maximus was promptly wiped out; and Valentinian was restored to the Empire of the West; where on his mother's death he fell completely under the influence of the orthodox party (A.D. 388).

His reign was brief although he had barely emerged from boyhood. The supreme command in Gaul was conferred on the pagan Frank, Arbogast, an able captain who had stood loyal to Gratian and had taken service with Theodosius instead of with Maximus. The Frank now gave way to aspirations of his own. After a quarrel with Arbogast, Valentinian committed suicide or was murdered, and Arbogast set up in his place his own puppet, Eugenius, in 392. In 394 Theodosius disposed of the usurper, and divided the succession in East and West between his own sons Arcadius (382-408) and Honorius (384-423). The latter at once became Western emperor, and on the death of Theodosius in A.D. 395 Arcadius succeeded him at Constantinople.

For more than half a century after Constantine's official recognition of Christianity by the Milan decree, religious toleration was the guiding rule of the Empire. The pagan rites had remained by the side of the Christian rites, Arianism beside orthodoxy. That phase ended with Theodosius, who received baptism on his accession, attached himself strenuously to the orthodox party in the Church, not hitherto favoured at Constantinople, and pronounced that paganism and Christi-

anity could not live side by side. Pagan temple revenues were sequestered, the images of the gods and their shrines were broken up, pagan rites were sternly prohibited, Arianism was proscribed both in the East and in the West. Paganism yielded a reluctant conformity without challenging martyrdom; but Arianism had taken too strong a hold, especially among the Gothic and other barbarian converts, to be altogether suppressed, and continued for some time to be a political force. The destruction of Arbogast and Eugenius was probably facilitated by the fact that they constituted themselves the champions of the moribund cause of paganism.

The young heirs of the powerful Theodosius were feeble and incompetent. From the death of Theodosius to the disappearance of the Western Empire, mighty figures stalked across a tragic stage, but they were those not of Roman or Byzantine emperors but of barbarians: Vandal, Visigoth, Ostrogoth, Frank; or Hun, more terrible than all the rest. For the dykes had burst, the Western Empire was

falling asunder, and the East was barely holding its own.

Theodosius had named as the guardian of his sons and chief of the armies of the West a soldier of approved ability and worth, the Vandal Stilicho. He discharged his office with more loyalty than Arbogast the Frank. Virtually the rule of the West was in his hands. While he was engaged in crushing the dangerous independence of a Moorish prince and tyrant, Gildo, in Africa the misrule of the prefect Rufinus



## AN INGLORIOUS EMPEROR

Flavius Honorius became emperor of the West in 394 when ten years old, and reigned ineffectually 29 years. This ivory diptych at Aosta, made for the consul Probus, is significant because of its early Christian interest.

*Photo, Moscovici*

## The Sundering Empire

at Constantinople brought on a great rebellion of the Visigoths—that branch of the Gothic race which Theodosius had settled in Moesia and Illyria, the Ostrogoths remaining beyond the Danube—led by Alaric the Balt (of the family, that is, which among the Goths stood second to the Amals, who were Ostrogoths).

The Goths overran Greece practically unchecked, and wrought much destruction, till the appearance of Stilicho, his work in Africa accomplished, stayed their conquering career. Alaric was in danger of being enveloped, but escaped with great skill; and in fact frightened the court at Constantinople into buying him off by appointing him to the command in Illyria as an imperial officer.

The Goth accepted the position, but as a stepping-stone. Italy was the objective on which he had fixed his ambitions; the very miscellaneous and for the most part barbarian troops now at his disposal were ready to follow him: and in A.D. 403 Honorius and Italy were terrified by an apparently wholly unexpected invasion. The genius of Stilicho, who with amazing energy gathered together troops from every possible quarter, saved the situation. In the duel between the two great captains Alaric met with a heavy defeat at Pollentia, and the caution of the Gothic chiefs compelled him for the time to abandon the contest.

The withdrawal of Alaric only left the way open for a fresh flood of mixed barbarians—worshippers for the most part, as the Goths had been before they elected to call themselves Christians, of Odin and Thor—to pour into Italy in 406, under their chief

Radagaisus. They swept over the plain of the Po, over the Apennines into Tuscany on their way to wipe out Rome; but while they delayed to besiege Florence, Stilicho again gathered troops in the north, spread them round the besieging hosts, cut off the supplies of the barbarians and reduced them by sheer starvation. Radagaisus with a third of his forces was compelled to capitulate; he himself was slain; the rest of the miscellaneous horde, Vandals, Sueves, Burgundians, Ostrogoths, Huns, Alans, were deliberately allowed to retreat unmolested across the Alps, and their various bands were soon spoiling and looting in Gaul on their way to Spain—doubtless with reinforcements from their respective homelands (A.D. 406).

Thus, it was only Italy that was quit of the invaders, who in 407 were harrying Gaul; and the harrying of Gaul was the warrant for the army in Britain to proclaim its own Augustus. Constantine III, probably a native Briton, was raised to the purple and betook himself to Gaul to save it from the Germans and add it to his own empire; taking with him not the whole imperial garrison, but a very substantial part of it. The Vandals, Sueves and Alans, however, did not seek to remain permanently in Gaul to dispute possession with Constantine, but took their devastating way through the south and the west to Spain; where they established themselves. On the middle Rhine the Burgundians appear to have remained in effective possession. Constantine pushed on to Spain, established his dominion in Aragon, and succeeded in extorting from Honorius his own recognition as a third Augustus.



**FLAVIUS STILICHO**

Stilicho (c. 359–408) saved the Western Empire by his military abilities and under Honorius was its virtual ruler. He fell a victim to intrigue and was put to death at Ravenna.

*From a diptych at Monza*

His movement to Gaul in 407 is commonly referred to as the Roman evacuation of Britain.

What of Stilicho meanwhile? His ambitions evidently centred in the relations between the Eastern and Western Empires, in both of which he sought to be the power behind the throne, as he already was in the West; the key to this position was the possession of the whole of Illyria, and he meant Alaric to be his agent. The Eastern court had no inclination to be dominated by him, and the relations between Byzantium and Ravenna (where for greater security Honorius had fixed his residence) were strained. He could not afford wholly to neglect the rebellion of Constantine, but left him to Alaric, with whom he had made his own bargain, and Alaric only made so much show of action as he considered sufficient.

Early in 408 Arcadius died, leaving the diadem to the six-years-old Theodosius II. Men believed on all hands that Stilicho, who had married the feeble Honorius to his own daughter, meant to make himself emperor. His enemies formed a plot and gained ascendancy over the mind of Honorius; in the height of his apparent power he was suddenly arrested, condemned without trial as a brigand and an enemy of the 'republic,' and executed. But no evidence of any treasonable designs on his part was ever forthcoming. Among those most active in his downfall was Heraclian, who was rewarded by being made count of Africa. Of him we shall hear again.

## Sack of Rome by Alaric

**STILICHO'S** fall opened the way on the one hand to friendly relations with Constantinople, and on the other to the ambitions of Alaric. It was, in fact, the expression of the simmering hostility

of Italy towards men of barbarian blood, and it was followed by the massacre of many of the foreigners in the country, which gave the Gothic king more than adequate warrant for swooping on Italy before the year was out.

Alaric marched straight on Rome, ignoring Honorius at Ravenna. The city was rapidly reduced to starvation, and

plague broke out. He demanded all the treasure within it and all the barbarian slaves. 'But what will you leave us?' asked the envoys. 'Your lives,' he answered. He was, however, persuaded to some contemptuous abatement of the terms, to which the unhappy Honorius had to send his sanction. But in the next year the emperor's evasions irritated the Goth into setting up the prefect Attalus as puppet emperor. Honorius, however, was made safe in Ravenna by the arrival of forces from the East;

Attalus declined to be altogether a puppet, and was deposed; further negotiations with Honorius broke down; Alaric lost patience, and on August 24, A.D. 410, he loosed his Goths and other followers on Rome, which suffered a three days' sack.

He did not, however, make himself emperor. He ravaged southward, and was planning an invasion of Africa, the granary of Italy, when at the end of the year he died. The Goths accepted as their king his brother-in-law, Athaulf. For another year they remained in Italy, though of their doings during that time we have no record. Clearly, however, Athaulf abandoned the design of invading Africa, perhaps because of naval difficulties; he had not made up his mind to turn the Roman into a Gothic empire; and in 412 the Visigoths crossed the Alps into Gaul.

While Athaulf was still lingering in Italy, the empire of Constantine III was collapsing. It extended, we have remarked, from Britain to Aragon. It



**GALLA PLACIDIA**

Daughter of Theodosius I, Placidia by her second marriage to Constantius became the mother of Valentinian III, during whose minority she was regent of the Western Empire

*Bibliothèque Nationale; photo, Giraudon*

## The Sundering Empire

broke down, partly owing to the revolt of one of his officers in Spain, Gerontius, and partly because, in 411, the place once held by Stilicho was to some extent filled by another able soldier, Constantius. Gerontius was besieging Constantine at Arles, when Constantius intervened on the hypothesis that both were rebels. Gerontius retreated to Spain, where he was murdered; Constantius captured Arles, and with it Constantine, who was executed.

No sooner had Constantius returned to Italy, which Athaulf was evacuating, than a new emperor, Jovinus, was proclaimed in Gaul. Athaulf and Jovinus might make

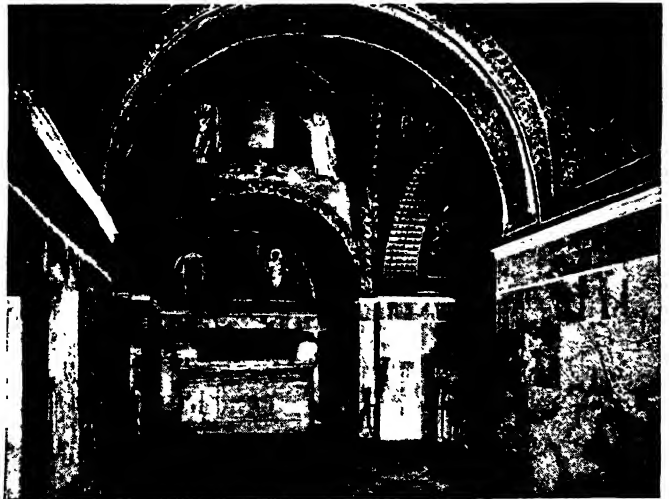
unromantic Honorius. When Alaric sacked Rome, the princess was one of the captives he carried off and kept for bargaining purposes. She left at the imperial court a devoted admirer whose passion she did not return, in the person of Constantius. Honorius wanted her back; so did Constantius. It was part of their bargain with Athaulf that she should be sent back, and also that they should supply his troops with corn; but unfortunately Heraclian's rebellion cut off the corn supply. Consequently Athaulf, instead of returning the princess, married her himself in 414; apparently with her own willing consent, but without that of her brother. There can be no doubt that her shrewd wits and (in a perfectly legitimate manner) her personal attractions exercised on the Gothic chiefs an exceedingly valuable influence.

The marriage did not draw Athaulf closer to the imperial court; and, not obtaining from it what he wanted, he carried his Goths and his bride into Spain. There he was murdered (415), and his successor Wallia bargained to make war on the



common cause, or more probably fall to fighting each other, especially as the Burgundians on the Rhine were supporting Jovinus; and then arose a new complication. Heraclian, the count of Africa, proclaimed himself emperor early in 413, and having already collected a great fleet sailed for Italy. Heraclian's rebellion proved an utter fiasco; he was taken and executed by midsummer; but meanwhile it had not been possible for Constantius and Honorius to take direct action in Gaul. Instead, they had bargained with Athaulf, who crushed Jovinus.

Now a hitherto unexploited figure of romance comes upon our stage—the princess Galla Placidia, sister of the very



### MAUSOLEUM OF A ROMANTIC EMPRESS

Carried off captive by Alaric and married—not unwillingly—to the Gothic king Athaulf, Galla Placidia later became the wife of Constantius, and was virtually empress after his death. She died about 450 and was buried in this mausoleum at Ravenna, brilliant with splendid mosaics.

*Photos, Alinari*

other barbarians in Spain. Placidia was at last sent back to Ravenna, where she reluctantly accepted the hand of the faithful Constantius. The Vandals, Alans and Sueves in Spain hastened to seek peace with the Empire, which they obtained; and Wallia with his Visigoths were settled in Aquitania instead, as 'federates.' This meant that they occupied most of the soil upon condition of

embarrassing affection for her, and retreated with her small children to Constantinople. Honorius, after a reign of twenty-nine years, during which nothing whatever is recorded to his credit, died at the age of forty (423). On the hypothesis of hereditary succession, the obvious heir was Placidia's child Valentinian; but a usurper named John, a rival of no particular merit, had to be suppressed before Placidia could effectively take up the regency in 425.

The leading figure in the West, however, for nearly thirty years to come was Aetius (395-454), a native of Moesia but of Italian descent. He had Gothic connexions, his wife being of a noble Gothic house, and Hun connexions because he had passed a long time as a hostage among the Huns. When John the usurper was overthrown, Aetius had been engaged in bringing a Hun force to his aid, but on John's fall made his peace with the reluctant Placidia, and was entrusted



## CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM BLENDED

The silver toilet casket of Projecta, member of a noble fourth-century family at Rome, illustrates the tolerant Christianity of the period. Projecta is on the side in a setting like that of the sarcophagi in pages 1932-3, the inscription contains the monogram of Christ; and Venus sports with Nereids on the lid.

*British Museum*

military service to the Empire, under their own king. A similar settlement was made with the Burgundians on the Rhine. In 417 Wallia was succeeded by Theodoric I, probably a grandson of Alaric.

The position in Britain at this time is by no means clear. Constantine had not left the island denuded of troops but only depleted. The Roman magistrates and the Roman government did not disappear, but they had to make the best they could of the situation out of their own resources; and the situation was difficult, as the raids of the unsubdued Picts and Scots on the north, Irish Celts on the west coast and Saxon rovers on the east and south coasts increased in intensity and frequency with the increasing weakness of the garrison and the neglect of the Roman channel fleet. But many years were still to pass before the raiders established a permanent footing.

In 421 Constantius was associated with Honorius as Western emperor, but died after a few months. Placidia quarrelled with her brother, who had developed an

with Gaul, where he checked the expansive disposition of the Burgundian Gunther in the east and the Goth Theodoric in the west and south, as well as of the Salian Franks on the Scheldt.

**B**UT the most notable movement during Placidia's regency was that of the Vandal-Alan group which had taken possession of southern Spain—whence its modern name Andalusia. In 428 Boniface the count of Africa had broken with the imperial government, and invited the help of the Vandals in his own ambitious projects. Africa offered a more promising field than Spain; the Vandals in a body, led by their crafty and able king Geiseric, crossed to Africa and proceeded to ravage Mauretania in a merciless fashion.

This was not what Boniface had intended. He returned to his allegiance, but when he fought the Vandals he was so heavily defeated that he threw up the contest and retired to Italy, where his rivalry with Aetius brought about an

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armed conflict in which he was killed (432), while all Africa—the province, not the continent—was at the mercy of Geiseric. The position in Gaul was too critical to permit a reconquest of Africa; but Geiseric was quite ready to make peace (435) on terms which left him practically master of Mauretania and part of Numidia.

In his conflict with Boniface, Aetius was in actual rebellion; but his rival's fall restored his ascendancy, which became a virtual supremacy when Placidia had to surrender the regency on the marriage of Valentinian, at eighteen, to his cousin Licinia Eudoxia at Constantinople (437).

The treaty had no sooner been made with the Vandals than Aetius found himself forced to curb first the Burgundians and then the Visigoths. The former he broke by calling in aid from the Huns, with whose king Rugila he had always been on the most friendly terms; but the remnant were resettled in Savoy. The Visigoths, who aimed at establishing themselves on the Mediterranean seaboard, were pushed back into Aquitania; but Aetius could not spare the energy or the forces simultaneously to hold in check the continued aggressions of the Vandals in Africa. Gaul kept him very thoroughly occupied.

### Vandals Established in Carthage

GEISERIC, then, a man of commanding personality, established over his own people so powerful a sway that, alone among the Teutonic communities, the Vandal kingdom became an absolute hereditary monarchy, in which the king's unfettered will was law. He was the tyrant of the Vandals, because he made the Vandals tyrants over the subject populations. In spite of the treaty of 435, he extended his African dominion till he won Carthage. Then, satisfied of the weakness of Italy, he collected a fleet and, as a preliminary, attacked Sicily.

The menace brought the Eastern Empire to the rescue of the West, and he was held up by the arrival of a Byzantine fleet on the scene. His own resources were obviously limited—the numbers of the whole Vandal nation in Africa are given as no more than 80,000—and Theodosius II

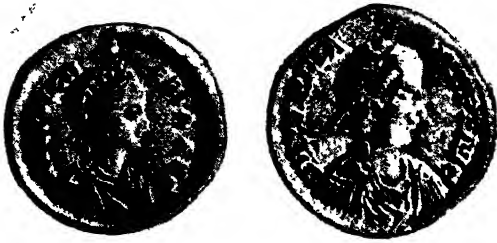
wanted not war but peace, being threatened by the Huns; so Geiseric was persuaded to withdraw for the time, retaining possession of Carthage. But the ancient Carthaginian menace to the Empire was again in being, with the Vandal substituted for the Phoenician (442).

### The Huns and the Eastern Empire

Now, however, the storm was gathering in a fresh quarter. We saw the Gothic movement accentuated at the close of the fourth century by the Hun inundation. The Visigoths had placed the Danube between themselves and the Asiatic torrent, but the Huns had brought under their own sway the trans-Danube Ostrogoths, Sarmatians and other barbarians; they had occupied Hungary, and they had extorted blackmail, an annual subsidy or tribute from Constantinople, as the price of peace. Their forces were united under the khan Rugila, who had been the friend of Aetius; and Hun troops appear generally as allies or auxiliaries of the imperial armies, as for instance against the Burgundians, till some time after the death of Rugila (c. 434). Rugila was succeeded by two nephews, one of whom does not concern us. The other nephew was Attila, the self-styled Scourge of God.

The dominion of which the Huns were lords extended eastwards indefinitely, and Attila's first years were probably given to consolidating his power in that direction; but in 441 he opened his attack on the Eastern Empire, to which we have been making only incidental references since noticing the accession of Arcadius in 395.

The East, in fact, had not been subjected to the need of constant struggles with the barbarians. Persia had ceased from aggression westwards, having always the Scythian menace on her eastern frontier, and Arcadius had not been long on the throne before Alaric and the Visigoths transferred their attentions from the Balkan to the Italian peninsula. The independent Arab tribes, now beginning to be known as Saracens, might worry Romans and Persians alternately, having their own retreat secured by the wastes of the Arabian desert, but they constituted



## PULCHERIA AND MARCIAN

Pulcheria, daughter of Arcadius, was born A.D. 399. In 414 she became guardian of Theodosius, was declared empress, and was virtual ruler until his death in 450. She then married Marcian, reigning with him until she died in 453.

*British Museum*

a menace to neither of the great powers. The Hun advance was engaged with the subjugation of trans-Danube barbarians, and eased instead of increasing the Gothic pressure after the Visigoths had passed within the borders of the Empire.

No pretenders arose to challenge the legitimate monarchy at Constantinople. Stilicho's policy made constant friction between Constantinople and Ravenna; but that phase passed when both Arcadius and Stilicho died in 408. And the general administrative machinery worked almost automatically. Some friction recurred between East and West, but without serious consequences, and for the most part friendly relations were preserved.

Theodosius II, succeeding when a child of seven, reigned but did very little ruling—that was left to more competent hands—for forty-two years, till his death in 450, in tranquil respectability; and the Empire enjoyed a placid prosperity instead of breaking up as might well have been anticipated. Able and judicious ministers were in charge from the outset; practically the place of Theodosius was presently taken by his rather older and much abler sister Pulcheria, under whose pious regime the court almost became a nunnery, while the emperor devoted himself mainly to literary, theological and scientific pursuits. The coming strife between the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities was foreshadowed by the strife between the patriarch Cyril and the semi-pagan prefect Orestes at Alexandria, from which Cyril emerged victorious in spite of his responsibility for one of the most inexcusable

crimes of which religious fanaticism has been guilty, the murder of the famous and blameless but pagan Hypatia.

On the death of Honorius, it was to Theodosius that the child Valentinian III owed the Western throne; it was the daughter of Theodosius whom he married in 437; and we have seen how the intervention of Theodosius prevailed on Geiseric to withdraw from Sicily in 441, at the moment of Attila's threatening approach to the Danube.

The popular impression concerning Attila and his Huns is somewhat misleading, the more so because the connected terms Mongol and Mongolian are confused and confusing, since the peoples who fall under the general, linguistic rather than ethnic, appellation of Mongolians include very distinct types, among whom the Mongols proper are one. The Huns were Mongols proper, pastoral tribes of central Asia; who had been propelled westward in a great and comparatively rapid migratory movement. The Alans whom we have met in Europe were Mongolians in the inclusive sense, but not Mongols. So were the Avars, Magyars, Bulgars and Turks, whom we shall meet hereafter. But after the disappearance of the Huns, Europe is untouched by the Mongols proper till the thirteenth century.

## Attila's boundless Ambition

**A**TTILA intended to be universal emperor, overlord of all other rulers; and the first step was to make the emperor at Constantinople submit to his lordship. The pretext was that Hun deserters were harboured in the Empire, in breach of the existing treaty. In 441 and 442 he overran a great part of the Balkan peninsula, capturing cities and devastating; but he did not attempt Constantinople, which was virtually impregnable. In 443 Theodosius came to terms; his subsidy or tribute was to be doubled, and a great belt of territory on the south of the Danube was to be left a waste, a no-man's-land, between the two empires. From Attila's point of view, Theodosius had acknowledged himself his tributary. The Hun was still dissatisfied, however, and again overran the peninsula in 447; but he



## The Sundering Empire

contented himself with a confirmation of the treaty in 449, and, like Alaric, turned his attention to the West.

In 450 Theodosius II died. The most notable achievements of his reign had been the issue of a great codification of the laws, known as the Theodosian code, and the establishment of a university at Athens. He had named as his successor an able officer, Marcian, with whom Pulcheria consented to go through the form of marriage in order to bring him into the imperial family circle. His brief and prosperous reign—he died early in 457—was distinguished by very judicious financial reforms, and by his repudiation of the Hun tribute; which would undoubtedly have brought Attila down on him but for the lure of the West.

A curious episode had perhaps determined Attila's course. The court at Ravenna proposed to marry Valentinian's sister Honoria to a safe and distinguished but elderly husband; she objected, and sent secretly to the mighty Hun, inviting him to rescue her. Attila accepted the message as a betrothal, and claimed his bride with half of her brother's empire for dowry (450). Valentinian raged and rejected the demand; and Attila marched on Gaul. He told Ravenna that he was coming to save the Romans from the Goths and the Goths that he was coming to take their part against the Romans; but the diplomacy of Aetius, exercised through his lieutenant Avitus, and the intelligence of Theodoric, sufficed to combine Romans and Visigoths against the Hun as being in fact their common enemy.

### Defeat of Attila at Châlons

**A**TTLA swept, devastating, over the Gallia frontier, with Orléans (the city of Aurelian) as his objective. Theodoric, aroused to the peril, effected a junction with Aetius; Attila began to retreat, turned to bay near Châlons, and suffered a crushing defeat, while Theodoric himself was killed. His son hastened home to secure the succession, and Aetius, following the example so often set by Stilicho, allowed Attila to retire over the border. The power of Attila was not in fact wrecked by the battle, though it was a

heavy check to him, and Gaul was delivered from his devastations.

Châlons (451) had been won by the temporary concert of the imperial government with the Visigoths. Even in the next year Attila threw himself on Italy to enforce his demand for Honoria's hand. Aetius could not risk a pitched battle; so that Attila destroyed Aquileia and marched on Rome. Tradition says that he was overawed by the Pope Leo; another story says that plague broke out in his camp; at any rate he did withdraw without attacking the city or being himself attacked, and certainly with no intention of resigning his claims. But in 453 he died or was murdered, and the whole terrifying if flimsy fabric of his empire dissolved. The Huns were helpless without a head: Ostrogoths, Gepids, Rugians, Herulians, rose and overwhelmed them at the battle of the Nedao in Pannonia (454); and the Huns are heard of no more as a power to be reckoned with. The service they had rendered to the Empire in Rugila's day, in checking the Teutons, outweighed the devastations wrought by Attila.

### Extinction of the House of Theodosius

**A**ETIUS, the 'last of the Romans,' met with the same reward as Stilicho the Vandal. The mind of the emperor was poisoned against him by the wealthy and ambitious Maximus and the chamberlain Heraclius. Valentinian charged the unsuspecting man with treason at the council table, and slew him with his own hand, but the great general was soon afterwards avenged by two of his servants, who slew Valentinian and the chamberlain (455). Two years later Marcian, the emperor of the East, died, and neither in East nor West was there a son of the house of Theodosius to succeed, nor any successor nominated by the deceased emperor.

At Constantinople the choice was dictated by the powerful soldier and minister Aspar, an Alan by race and an Arian by creed, who nominated Leo, a Thracian. Leo reigned, not at all as the puppet of the man to whom he owed his elevation, from 457-474. He countered the Teutonising tendencies of Aspar by recruiting his armies and his ministers from his own



## Chronicle XIII. A.D. 330-476

people. He secured the succession to his son-in-law Zeno, an Isaurian, whose reign belongs to the next Chronicle.

The twenty years between 455 and 476 saw the establishment of the Teutonic ascendancy in the West and the disappearance of the separate Western Empire, or rather emperor. The Roman Empire, to which the West still owed allegiance, still existed, but its seat was Constantinople, and there was no Augustus of the West.

### Chaos and Disintegration in the West

**W**HEN Valentinian was murdered Maximus bought the crown, and forced the widowed Eudoxia to marry him. Geiseric the Vandal—summoned to her aid, as some say, by Eudoxia—arrived two months later with a fleet. The mob tore Maximus limb from limb, which did not prevent Geiseric from occupying Rome, sacking it with methodical and conscientious thoroughness, and retiring with a host of captives, including Eudoxia and her two daughters, the younger of whom he married to his son Hunseric.

A few weeks later a new emperor was proclaimed by the Goths at Tolosa (Toulouse), Avitus, the lieutenant of Aetius, who had been mainly instrumental in bringing the Goths up to the Châlons campaign. Marcian in the East and Avitus in the West both threatened Geiseric, who defied them both. Avitus put his armies under control of Ricimer, a Sueve, but also grandson of the Visigoth Wallia, and Ricimer won a naval victory over the Vandals.

Meanwhile Theodoric II, posing as imperial champion, attacked the Sueves in Spain, breaking but not destroying their power. Avitus was bound closely to the Goths, while Italy detested them, and did not want their championship; Ricimer was a Sueve. Avitus had to beat a hasty retreat from Italy; Ricimer joined in setting up the Roman Majorian, an officer of distinction, as emperor, and the deposed Avitus was consoled with a bishopric (457). Majorian before his death had bestowed on Ricimer the title of Patrician—in effect, first minister—which had been borne by Stilicho, Constantius and Aetius before him. Four years later Ricimer deposed

Majorian, and set up a puppet, Libius Severus. Majorian had declined to be puppet, but the fleet he collected against the Vandals met with disaster, a sufficient excuse for his removal. Severus died, and for a time there was no emperor save Leo at Constantinople, till in 467 Leo appointed, as Western Augustus, the Greek Anthemius, son-in-law of Marcian. Ricimer was placated by receiving the new emperor's daughter to wife. Then East and West combined to crush the Vandals, who were masters of the Mediterranean. They seemed on the point of doing so when the craft of Geiseric, aided by fortune, turned the tables on them, and it was the imperial fleet, commanded by Basiliscus, that met with overwhelming disaster (468).

The Vandal held the commerce of the Mediterranean at his mercy; when the Empire tried to attack him, the stars in their courses fought against it. The Visigoths under the ablest of their kings, Euric, were bringing southern Gaul, from the Loire to the Rhône, under their sway. Britain had slipped her cables; and Jutes and Saxons had at last fastened their grip on her eastern and south-eastern shores, though they had not yet penetrated far inland. Northern Gaul was drifting after Britain. To the east of Gaul the Burgundian kingdom was waxing so strong that the Gallo-Romans were looking to it as a counterpoise to the Goths. In Italy, half the soldiers and most of the officers, with Ricimer at the top, were Teutons; while Ricimer himself was still clinging to the theory of a dual Roman Empire and quarrelling with his father-in-law, who scorned him as a barbarian and whom he despised as a 'Greekling.'

### Deposition of the last Western Emperor

**I**N 472 Ricimer resolved to depose Anthemius, against whom he advanced, having proclaimed in his room Olybrius, the husband of the elder daughter of Valentinian. Anthemius was taken and put to death, but within a few weeks Ricimer died. For a time his place was taken by his Burgundian nephew Gundobad. Olybrius died, and after some delay Gundobad set up a puppet, Glycerius (473), whom Leo at Constantinople declined

## The Sundering Empire

to recognize. Gundobad returned to Burgundy, and Leo proclaimed Julius Nepos; while Glycerius exchanged his diadem for a mitre (474). Next year Julius was a fugitive from Rome, ejected by his master of the soldiers, Orestes, who made his own son, contemptuously known as Romulus Augustulus, emperor. At the same time Zeno, the successor of Leo, was a fugitive from Constantinople, ejected by that Basiliscus whose fleet had been annihilated by Geiseric. Both the usurpers fell in 476. In the East Zeno was restored; but in the West the power was seized by the Scirian Odoacer. And Odoacer chose neither to be Augustus himself nor to serve another Western Augustus, but to be the viceroy of the one Roman Emperor at Constantinople.

### Events in China and India

**I**n the far East during this period China was in a state of political disintegration. A Chin or Ts'in dynasty was more or less predominant, with its capital at Nanking, when Constantine the Great was transforming Byzantium into the capital of the Roman Empire. Buddhism was in considerable favour, and some of our information about India, where that creed still survived in some strength, is derived from the Chinese Buddhist Fa-Hien (or Fa-Hsien), who paid it a prolonged visit in the first decade of the fifth century.

Before that time was reached, China (c. 384) split into two main empires, of the North and South; the Toba dynasty reigning in the north, while in 420 the Tsins in the south were displaced by the Sungs. The dynasty founded by Toba is better known as that of the Northern Wei. Both the Sungs and the Wei had to deal with subordinate or insubordinate kings, besides occasionally fighting each other. And their monarchs died at frequent intervals, usually by violence.

In India, on the other hand, the period was one of prosperity. The 'Indo-Scythian' Kushan monarchs still reigned at Peshawar, though their greater dominion had broken up when Chandragupta (to be distinguished from the Maurya; see page 2128) inaugurated the Gupta kingdom or empire in Magadha, about 320. A

succession of powerful monarchs, each ruling for many years, gave to it a sway as wide as that of the Mauryas. Samudragupta (c. 330-375), the second of the dynasty, made himself lord of the whole Ganges basin, penetrated far into the Deccan, established relations with Ceylon and claimed that the eastern princes, even to Assam, were his tributaries. His son Chandragupta II Vikramaditya (c. 375-413) subdued the rulers of Malwa (Ujjain) and the Maratha country, who still bore the title of satraps inherited from the days when they were feudatories of the Kushans who yet ruled the Punjab from Peshawar.

It was while Chandragupta II was reigning that the Chinese Fa-Hien made his pious pilgrimage, incidentally noting the personal freedom and the prosperity enjoyed by the subjects of the great king whose name he never mentions. Kumargupta (413-455) was the monarch in whose reign flourished the greatest, perhaps, of Indian poets, Kalidasa, the author of *Sakuntala*. Through Kumargupta's rule and that of his successor, Skandagupta (455-480), the majesty of the Gupta empire continued undiminished; for the latter drove back triumphantly the new hordes pouring into India through the north-west passes, by way of which came the similar invaders who in the next generation broke through the defences.

### Prosperity and Culture in India

**T**HE arts flourished greatly in the Gupta period. Samudragupta was poet and musician as well as warrior and statesman; the name of Kalidasa speaks for poetry. In spite of the destruction wrought in later ages, enough of temple building and sculpture survives to show that the work of the period was of the highest quality. (See further in Chap. 91.)

But the wreckers were coming; for at the time when the Huns who had migrated to Europe were rising to the height of their power and falling plumb to the depths again, their kindred in central Asia were hammering the eastern borders of Persia and beginning to advance southwards. It was a Hun invasion that was stemmed by Skandagupta—not the last of the Guptas, but the last of their great emperors.



Style assigns this intricate sarcophagus to the late third century. Its subject is a conflict between Romans and Germans, and probably the emperor in the centre is Claudius Gothicus. Note the 'bracae' and sparse clothing of the barbarians.

*Museo delle Terme; photo. Alinari*



The sarcophagus at the top of the page shows us the more backward Germans or else the rank and file of the tribesmen. That the irregulars serving under the Romans were more fully clothed, though still in a national style, is shown by the portion (left) of the Column of Trajan; while the captive German lady in a wagon and the chief's sons herded by the Roman captor (right), from the Column of Marcus Aurelius, give the same impression of the independent tribes.

#### GERMANIC INVADERS OF THE EMPIRE SEEN THROUGH ROMAN EYES

*'left, from Cichorius, 'Die Traianssäule'; right, from Petersen, 'Die Marcus-Säule'*

# THE GERMANIC INVADERS: THEIR ORIGINS AND CULTURE

What Archaeology and History can tell of the Northern Barbarians to whom the Empire bowed

By W. O. L. COPELAND

Assistant Editor of the Universal History of the World

WHEN in 330 Constantine fixed his imperial residence at Byzantium he altered history. To us, looking back on the part that the city was to play under its new name of Constantinople, it seems as though he must have foreseen the birth of Mahomet; but, although it is true that a rejuvenated kingdom of Persia under its Sassanid dynasty was proving quite troublesome enough to constitute an Eastern Problem worthy of his attention, yet those on whom he had his most watchful eye were probably folk of a very different stamp: folk whom we have met at intervals since the days of Marius, who had shattered the legions of Decius eighty years before and devastated the Balkans until defeated by Claudius Gothicus, who had poured from their homes on the Black Sea in disastrous maritime raids through the Bosphorus that Constantinople was now to guard. They were the Germanic peoples.

At various periods throughout history there suddenly appear on the stage peoples whose destiny is fraught with meaning for the world, but whose origins are obscure. We have seen the Achaeans unmaking an older world with their slashing swords, the Persians grasping the motley East and wielding it like a weapon for the span of two centuries, and the problems that their culture and their ancestry set the inquisitive mind of man are food for endless controversy. But the Achaeans, their work done, left but a name behind them, while the lamp of the Persians, though not utterly extinguished, has given nothing but an unexpected

flicker at long intervals. How much more then should the Teutons raise our curiosity, the Teutons who have not only made Europe what it is to-day with much of the world besides, but whose speech is still the speech of millions and whose blood, acknowledged or unacknowledged, probably flows in the veins of every man and woman who claim a share in that 'culture' known as Western civilization?

What information about them can we collect? There is all that falls under the head of archaeology—the contents of tombs; 'treasures' buried or accidentally lost, and found in modern days; the objects, that may be votive offerings, recovered from time to time from the bogs of Slesvig. Then there are the notices of contemporary writers, Tacitus first and foremost, who with admirable restraint set down all that he could verify of Germany in the reign of

Sources for  
Teutonic culture

Nerva, and, a long way after Tacitus, the historians and orators who give us incidental references: Ammianus Marcellinus, for instance, or Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius, who in a letter describes the court of the Visigoth Theodoric II in Gaul. Then, still later, there are the Teutons who themselves composed histories of their own people in Latin, wherein fact and legend mingle inextricably: the monk Jordanes, perhaps an Ostrogoth, who wrote his History of the Goths about the year 550, or Saxo Grammaticus, who did a like service for the Danes towards the end of the twelfth century. And finally, a source of which the value has been appreciated only in

modern times, the heroic poetry that survives from the Age of Migrations itself.

Almost all of these last are preserved in Anglo-Saxon, though their themes are without exception continental. The only complete poem is the *Beowulf*, narrating the adventures of a hero of the Geatas, a southern Scandinavian folk, at the court of the Scyldings or kings of Denmark (see also Chap. 93); in its present form it seems to date from the seventh century, though the events which it describes took place at the beginning of the sixth, if we may judge from the one historical reference for which we have exterior chronological evidence. Other fragments, notably *Deor*, at least purport to be much older.

The period that concerns us starts from the moment when people of Germanic speech and independent culture can be recognized in the north of

**The period under review** Europe, and ends with the establishment of more or less settled kingdoms, Germanic still but freshly oriented by their heritage from the great empire of the south, by their Roman subjects, by Christianity and a whole host of complex factors. The anterior limit is quite indefinite: the posterior limit must be arbitrary, but may be fixed at the settlement of the Lombards in Italy in the middle of the sixth century A.D. And even this leaves out of account the later Viking Age, which reproduces in so many ways the social and cultural history of the earlier period, with the established Teutonic kingdoms now playing the rôle of the Roman Empire; but the Vikings are dealt with in Chapter 96.

An attempt to disentangle the complicated movements during this long period of all the tribes whose names are recorded is luckily unnecessary for our purpose; since we can recognize two distinct cultural phases, each of which, with reservations, admits of being treated as a unit. But to appreciate this a glance at the historical setting is necessary.

Owing to their remoteness from the seats of Mediterranean civilization it is at first only as occasional invaders that we hear historically of Teutonic tribes. The *Bastarnae*, a people said to be German,

anticipated the Goths by moving to the shores of the Black Sea and threatening the Greek colonies in the second century B.C. The *Cimbri* and *Teutones*—the latter a single tribe which, like the *Alemanni*, has given to the whole race one of the names by which it is known—were defeated by *Marius* and *Catulus* on the soil of Italy in 101 and 102 B.C. Some thirty years later *Ariovistus* invaded Gallic territory in circumstances of which we have a record left by *Julius Caesar*, who drove him back across the Rhine in 58 B.C. The Celts were the dominant people in central Europe all this while, and on the whole the Germans do not give the impression of a people under the urge of migration; the movement of *Ariovistus* we know to have been by invitation from the Gallic *Sequani*.

The years that followed must have been of incalculable importance for the fate of the Germans. Outwardly little happened. Fighting attended the rectification and adjustment of the Roman frontiers, but it was of little moment except for the one unforgettable disaster in which *Varus* lost his life and his legions; and that was the result of Roman rather than German aggression. But contact with the superior civilization of Rome must have wrought a subtle change in the temper of men's minds; **Spreading of Roman influence** Germans in ever increasing numbers were drafted into the Roman armies, first as irregulars for temporary service and later on a more permanent footing as '*auxilia*'; time-expired soldiers were settled in military frontier colonies, where their Latin-inscribed tombstones still survive to show the influence that they must have radiated into the hinterland, or that those who returned to their own folk must have carried with them; finally articles of Roman commerce steadily penetrated northwards, and are found in great numbers even as far afield as Denmark.

It can scarcely be maintained that by itself this psychological change sufficed to set the '*Völkerwanderungen*' or Migrations of Peoples in motion, but it was probably a contributory factor, and it almost certainly determined the form in which the phenomenon was manifested.

Perhaps the immediate exciting cause was a westward pressure of Slavs along the coast of the Baltic, but of this there is no direct record. At any rate, a people called the Goths, one of the easternmost of the Baltic tribes, were the first to move; and they remain throughout in many ways the most interesting, historically, socially and artistically.

According to the tale recounted by Jordanes, they dwelt originally in the 'island of Scanzia,' which must mean the south of the Scandinavian peninsula, and took ship thence to the lands where we first find them. Whether this be true or not, it was an event of the remote past; at least five centuries, and not the reign of five kings as Jordanes says, were the term of their sojourn, for Pytheas (c. 350 B.C.) mentions the amber-gathering 'Guttones,' and amber is a product of the south-eastern Baltic shore. Their new, and only authentic, move began in the second century A.D., and brought them from sea to sea, from the Baltic to the Euxine. If only there remained a personal account of that epic journey!

It cannot have been unopposed. Jordanes is our only authority, apart from the indubitable presence of the Goths on the north coast of the Black Sea; but the sudden boiling over of the Marcomanni that called Marcus Aurelius to the Danube frontier in A.D. 165 must surely be connected with it. The Marcomannic wars were the first sign of trouble for the Roman world, and are usually accepted as ushering in the second phase of our subject, the Age of Migrations.

From this moment the Germans come steadily forward into the light of history; every generation seems to bring a fresh tribal name to our notice. Their marches and counter-marches and the complicated waxing and waning of their power are treated in the appropriate Chronicles, but it may not be out of place to concentrate in one short sketch the cardinal events attending the fortunes of the most important of them.

The same Marcommanic campaign behind which the Gothic movements can be detected affords us a glimpse of the Van-

dals and the Lombards, but neither of these gives serious trouble to the Roman world for some time to come. The Goths hold the field, first as 'foederati' of the Roman Empire, then as implacable enemies when the annual gifts are withheld in the middle of the third century. There followed the raids already mentioned, by land into the Balkans and by sea through the Bosphorus, which were ended by the victories of Claudius Gothicus and by the abandonment of Dacia under Aurelian (270). Shortly before, we hear for the first time of the Franks on the lower reaches of the Rhine, the Salian Franks in Holland and Belgium and the Riparian Franks farther inland.

The Goths who occupied Dacia were the Visigothic branch; those who remained in Scythia the Ostrogoths. Whether these names really mean 'West' and 'East' Goths is doubtful, Division of Gothic race for Jordanes tells of a king called Ostrogotha in a way that hardly suggests a mere eponymous hero, and he is confirmed by the Anglo-Saxon fragment, Widsith; but certainly from the moment when we first see the race divided the two branches maintain that geographical relation to each other through all their wanderings. For the moment the Visigoths are of less political importance than the Ostrogoths, who in the fourth century built something like an empire beyond the confines of the Roman world under the doubtless historical Hermanaric, or Eormenric.

The next event after nearly a century of peace is the appearance of the Huns, who in 376 drove the Visigoths, now Christianised largely through the missionary efforts of Ulfilas, across the Danube into Roman territory. Their arrival was in friendly guise and by Roman permission; but for the treachery and stupidity of the Eastern emperor Valens their presence might have been of the utmost value. But hostilities broke out and Valens was slain at Hadrianople, that most ghastly of Roman defeats that takes rank with the annihilation of Varus by Arminius and of Decius by Cniva. In the meantime the Huns had thrust a wedge between these Visigoths and their Ostrogothic kinsmen, who were

pushed north-westwards inland from the Black Sea and partly subdued to the Hunnish confederacy.

Hitherto, but for the Visigoths in the Balkans, the Roman Empire appeared outwardly inviolate. But two facts must be remembered; the settlement of barbarians in almost all the depopulated frontier provinces, and the enrolment of vast numbers in the imperial armies, from the time of Marcus Aurelius onwards. Before Constantine's days the latter would have been under the command of subordinate officers, but soon afterwards we find the highest posts throughout the army being filled by Germans. And now even this fictitious integrity is to disappear.

From their seat on the middle Danube the Vandals in a whirlwind migration descend on Spain in 409 with a motley horde of Sueves and Alemanni, and from their new home in the Balkans the Visigoths are led by Alaric to the sack of Rome in 410. From

Italy the Visigoths march on to Gaul in 418 and thence to Spain a few years later, where endless bickerings with the Vandals bid fair to destroy both races. The timely invitation of the Vandals into Africa, however, leaves the Visigoths free to establish a kingdom on both sides of the Pyrenees with its capital at Toulouse. At this time the Burgundians are dwelling on the middle Rhine, round Worms. Smitten by the Huns in 437, they are transferred to the district south of Lake Geneva by Aetius, after his victory in conjunction with the Visigoths over Attila. The dispositions in the fifth century then are: Vandals in Africa, Visigoths in Spain and Gaul, a Roman emperor still in Italy, the Ostrogoths still in the hinterland.

Franks and Ostrogoths contrive the next change of scene. Clovis accedes to the kingship of the Salian Franks in 481, and while he is engaged in conquering North Gaul Theodoric the mighty Ostrogoth leads his people into Italy (nominally as a pro-Roman against Odoacer, who has deposed the last emperor) and there sets up a brilliant kingdom (496). In 507 Clovis drives the Visigoths over the Pyrenees, while the Burgundians are

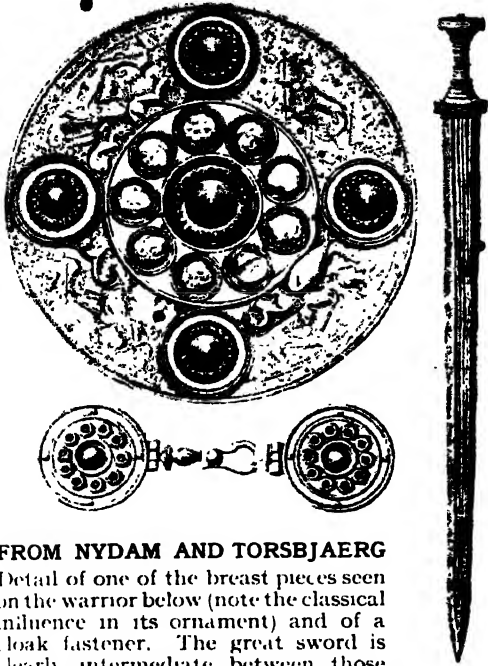
absorbed. Dispositions, therefore: Vandals in Africa, Visigoths in Spain, Franks in Gaul, Ostrogoths in Italy—the Lombards are apparently occupying Hungary.

The campaigns of Belisarius in 534 broke the power of the Vandals in Africa and restored it to the Eastern Roman Empire; but the destruction of the Ostrogothic kingdom by him and Narses left Italy wide open for the Lombards, who poured into the plains of the Po under Alboin in 568 and spread devastatingly southwards. Throughout the same century the Anglo-Saxons and Jutes had been flooding into Britain from Slesvig and the district between the Rhine and the Elbe, north of the Franks. All further alterations to the political map were caused by different folk—Bulgars, Slavs or Arabs—or by individual warriors, such as Charles the Great, rather than whole peoples in motion; the Age of Teutonic Migrations was over.

All the evidence seems to show that the original home of the Germanic peoples was in the region between the lower courses of the Elbe and the Vistula, including Slesvig-Holstein, Denmark and the southern portion at least of the Scandinavian peninsula. There they acquired their distinctive language and customs. Whether they were 'autochthonous' in the rigid sense is another matter; Tacitus believed so, but the only reason that he advances is the repellent nature of the climate, such that no one would deliberately choose to migrate thither from any other land—a naïve enough theory. We with our still incomplete but more varied sources of information must beg leave to doubt him.

For one thing, we know that however unpleasant the weather in the days of Tacitus, it had been far worse before. The Scandinavian ice cap that was a legacy of the last ice age advanced and retreated over the Baltic region long after the rest of Europe was habitable; and even after it had finally gone, perhaps no more than 10,000 years ago, the dreary marsh-land that it left behind harboured at least two peoples, from whom alone it seems impossible to derive the German stock, except in the view of certain





**FROM NYDAM AND TORSBJAERG**

Detail of one of the breast pieces seen on the warrior below (note the classical influence in its ornament) and of a cloak fastener. The great sword is clearly intermediate between those in page 1516 and page 2219.

German scholars who seek the homeland of the original Aryan-speaking population in this northern region: the shellfish-eating kitchen-midden folk, miserable remnants of the Old Stone Age in Europe, and the Maglemose raft-dwellers, intruders it would seem from the east. The latter do not appear to have survived the subsequent spread of the forests, but of the former Tacitus may well preserve a record when he speaks of the Fenni, utter savages of an Eskimo-like culture; and he expressly refrains from identifying them for certain with the Germans. They may be responsible for the Mongoloid strain apparent in the modern Finns.

What first gave an individual imprint to the population was most probably the irruption of peoples from the steppe-land of South Russia, peoples who in the view here adopted are the only ones entitled to be called the original 'Aryans.' In Chapter 30 we have seen their conquering bands revolutionising the society of central Europe shortly after 3000 B.C., introducing new weapons, the horse and their own exceptionally flexible language, and imparting a stimulus to trade and warfare. At the same time, or perhaps slightly later, other bands reached the Baltic region,

some directly no doubt by the open plains that outflank the central European massif, others perhaps by following the river valleys seaward after sojourning for a while in central Europe.

Even this, however, offers no explanation of why the Germans differed in language and in appearance from the other speakers of Aryan tongues. As for language, there is no reason to suppose that the dialects of the various Aryan bands were at all uniform even at the moment of their dispersal, while they must have been profoundly affected by the original tongues of the peoples among whom they came; and as the Aryans can have been little more than a conquering aristocracy their physique would soon become merged in that of their subjects. Now there is a fair unanimity among ancient writers that the typical German was large-framed and fair-haired, with greyish-blue eyes; was this the original mark of the Aryan, preserved uncontaminated in the north, or did it

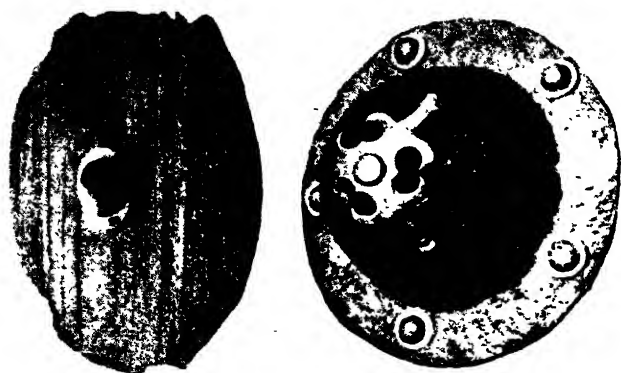


**NORTHERN CHIEF IN FULL ARRAY**

This figure of a chief has been reconstructed from objects (third century A.D.) found in the moss-bogs of Nydam and Torsbjaerg in Jutland. The corslet of iron ring-mail and the silver head-dress and mask-visor are rare possessions. The great sword is of the 'spatha' type.

From G. Stephens, 'The Old-Northern Runic Monuments'





### SHIELD AND BOSS OF GERMAN WARRIORS

In the absence of body armour the shield was an important part of Teutonic gear. In later graves only the iron boss survives (right, ornamented in Lombard style, from Mainz); but in the mosses of Denmark the wooden part (left, from Copenhagen), averaging 35 inches in diameter, is preserved.

*Courtesy of Professor Baldwin Brown*

characterise peoples already dwelling there when the Aryans arrived?

Probably the truth lies somewhere between these extremes. We know nothing about the colouring of the pre-Aryans. On the other hand there was a tradition of fairness as a kingly trait among the Achaeans and among the Aryan invaders of India; but in southern lands where skin-pigment is necessary to withstand the sun this would be eventually bred out. The Celts belong to a category too vague on which to base any arguments, but a fairness that has now almost vanished is continuously noted among the many conflicting statements about them. Moreover the Aryans were moderate long-heads, whereas in central Europe broad-headedness was rife, and in a racial mixture it has been observed that the characteristics of the broad-heads tend to be dominant. In the north, however, no torrid climate called for pigmentation, nor was the population broad-headed; and we may well imagine that it was far less numerous and less able by virtue of advanced culture to hold its own in a mixed community. In such circumstances natural selection would tend to perpetuate a characteristic regarded as a mark of beauty because associated with a conquering aristocracy.

We may think of the Aryans, then, as showing a tendency to fairness that disappeared with varying degrees of completeness in other parts of the world but

became fixed, and probably accentuated, in the north. It would be going too far to deny any mixture of blood; the Germanic languages, for one thing, with the consonantal changes that mark them off from the rest of the Aryan family, are suspected of having been garbled by alien lips.

The material culture enjoyed by these dwellers in the north in the earlier periods has been dealt with in Chapter 30. Bronze reached them late, and the Bronze Age lasted later than in the south, but the exquisite work that they achieved in the metal shows that this was due to their re-

moteness and to no lack of skill or inventive capacity. The First or Hallstatt Iron Age does not seem to have reached them at all; their first introduction to iron occurred during the La Tène period. Even Tacitus at the end of the first century A.D. can say: 'Iron does not abound in Germany, if we may judge from the weapons in general use.'

It would give a false impression, however, to speak of a definite La Tène culture-period in the north. In the first place there is already appearing, even **Differences from La Tène Art** thus early, a certain alien element in the art that will be discussed later when it becomes more marked during the Age of Migrations; in the second, the introduction of iron was not accompanied by any such growth of a distinctive craftsmanship as we may see in Celtic work. Rather was there a noticeable artistic retrogression.

In all probability the Germans were now outgrowing the resources of their land, but were hemmed in by peoples whose earlier knowledge of iron had given them a start that they still maintained. The Celts, as we know (see Chap. 50), were enjoying a period of wealth and expansion, and were no doubt well able to deal with any trouble looming out of the more barbarous north. The Germans had still to be tempered in the fires of the internecine warfare that such conditions would

produce, and for the moment there were only sporadic outbreaks like those of the Bastarnae and Teutones, foredoomed to failure. Hence the rather savage picture painted by Tacitus, so hard to reconcile with the art products of an earlier age; though we must remember that the only people whom he could describe at first hand were the frontier tribes in the south and west, and we have every reason to suppose that those on the amber-producing Baltic coasts were richer and more consolidated, as appears even from his account of the Goths, Rugii and Suiones.

Manners were very like those of the Celts described in Chapter 50, except that the Celts were socially more

**Manners of the Germanic folk** advanced and approximating to something like a territorial kingship. Among the Germans there was no uniformity, some tribes acknowledging an hereditary king, others apparently electing officers in an emergency; kingship was most developed among the Goths, but in no instance was the kingly power unlimited. The check was the voice of the whole free community, meeting at stated intervals or summoned for sudden business. The king or the chiefs, as the case might be, prepared the matter in hand and expounded it, but the priests seem to have had the greater coercive power both in convening the assembly and keeping it in order when convened; all had the right of discussion in turn according to rank or renown. These priests, too, were the only judicial officers.

Women occupied a high place in the community, which was strictly monogamous. In battle they encouraged their kinsfolk with blood-curdling cries, succoured the wounded, and even mingled in the fray to give greater effect to their exhortations. Tales are told of queens, and the historical Veleda in Vespasian's reign was half queen and half goddess to her own tribe, and consulted as a prophetess by the tribes for miles around.

In times of peace they managed the household and even the estate; for their husbands, we are told, solved the problem of existence by spending most of their time sleeping and eating when they had no fighting to be done and no national

assemblies at which to indulge their love of debate. This suggests that the 'free' German communities must really have been built on a basis of slavery, but it was more like medieval serfdom than what the Romans understood by the term; each 'slave' lived apart and managed his own affairs, furnishing his lord with a fixed quantity of produce.

The general (but not universal) practice of cremation at this period robs us of the evidence that the tomb furniture of inhumation burials usually gives about arms and household gear, but there is no reason to suppose that the warrior's equipment differed in anything but less elaboration from that of the Migration Period. Tacitus tells us that large swords were rare, and that the usual weapon was an easily wielded javelin; this is confirmed by the later tomb furniture, wherein the commonest weapon is a smallish javelin-head, of which the shaft cannot have exceeded six feet, or else it would not have fitted in the grave. No body armour was worn, but shields were carried, of hide-covered wood with a metal boss. Only the boss survives in the later graves, but the wood



**CLOAKED GERMAN WITH TOPKNOT**

A Roman bronze statuette of a German sung for quarter seems to illustrate what Tacitus recounts especially of the Suevi—that they dressed their long hair in a curious topknot. The hair was not invariably worn long, however.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

is preserved in the mosses of Slesvig, and some of the objects from these may possibly go back to this early period.

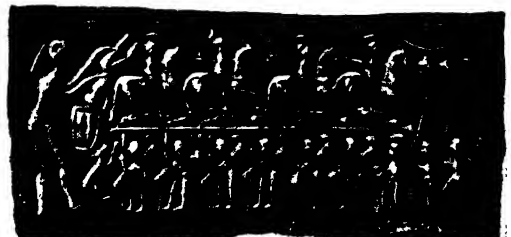
Cavalry was an arm very skilfully employed, as one might expect among the descendants of the horse-riding Aryan nomads, but the infantry formed the strength of the army. A warrior in later days was sometimes buried with his horse, but the practice was not universal, as among the Scythians; though an echo of the sacred character that it seems to have borne among the Aryans is found in the statement that auspices were taken from the neighing of certain milk-white horses, kept for no other purpose.

One most interesting feature that Tacitus records, and that goes far to establish the accuracy of his observations, can be observed full blown in the heroic poetry of the later Migration Age, and seems to contain in itself the germ of medieval chivalry. It was the custom for a chief to surround himself with a retinue of young warriors, his 'companions'; his prestige in peace and his success in war depended on their numbers and their valour. Liberality was the quality in a chief that his companions demanded, and they might be attracted to his service from distant tribes if his renown travelled so far; the tie was then purely personal—as Tacitus succinctly puts it: 'The chief fights for victory; the followers for their chief.'

Another custom that was destined to bear fruit was the reciting of martial poetry. The account of Tacitus, it is true, suffers from compression and appears to confuse the war-chant sung, or rather howled, by the host before a battle with national sagas performed by professional reciters. Martial poetry more probably after the of the Teutons battle and in celebration of it. It was these rude strains which, when transferred to the court of the chieftain, engendered such courtly heroic poetry as the Beowulf epic.

Of religion at this period it is hard to say anything connected; Tacitus has some interesting tales to tell, and the names involved guarantee their authenticity, but it will be simpler to consider the subject, partly in retrospect, later, when more material is available for study.

Corn only was cultivated, fruit-trees being unknown—a striking contrast with modern Germany, where orchard-blossom lines the roads. From the corn the national beer was brewed—less of a contrast. The costume is represented as being wild and scanty, no more than a single cloak in the coldest weather; but again we must remind ourselves that Tacitus is speaking from knowledge of the south-west frontier, and things may have been different farther north. He is supported by the Column of Marcus Aurelius, which shows many Germans either naked but for a cloak or wearing only the 'bracae' (breeches); Tacitus, strangely, does not mention these in so many words. Hair was sometimes left



#### OBSCURE HINT AT THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK OF THE EARLY TEUTONS

The obscure but sinister-looking ornament on a silver sacrificial bowl dating from the end of the Early Northern Iron Age (i.e. about A.D. 200-300), and found at Gundestrup in Jutland, has been claimed to show Celtic cult-influence. There is little reason for this, however, as everything indicates that early Teutonic religion was a grim and earth-bound affair very different from the poetry-embroidered mythology revealed in later Scandinavian literature. One of the panels on the inside of the bowl (right), with its naked priest, seems to be a scene of human sacrifice.

*From 'Nordischer Fortidsminder'*

long, sometimes not; sometimes not cut before the fulfilment of a vow. Certain tribes wore top-knots, like a bronze figure in Paris, and the attention given to the hair is illustrated by the combs and shears found in many later graves.

This was the people whose contact with the civilized world to the south of them produced a phenomenon that can, indeed, be paralleled in other ages and among other people but is sufficiently rare to be of absorbing interest: to the historian it appears as the Age of Migrations; its social and cultural counterpart is known as the Heroic Age.

An heroic age only seems to occur when a young and vigorous race is brought into contact with an older and more developed civilization. As Professor Chadwick, who first laid emphasis on the phenomenon as a genuine social phase, points out, mercenary service in the pay of the older civilization is certainly a predisposing factor. First of all, there is the jolt of intercourse with men who quietly sneer at the parochial allegiances, the tribal gods, the ancestral customs that have been the all in all of the tribesman's life. Next there are the mercenaries who return from long service under the alien power and form, it may be, an emancipated aristocracy. And lastly, perhaps, some noble hostage—Theodoric the Ostrogoth was such—will bring back with him a blend of courtly refinement with an utter disregard of tribal ethics and tribal restrictions on kingly power. And the whole process will be aided by the steady infiltration of foreign goods—ornaments, currency and, above all, weapons.

These were precisely the influences at work on the Germans for the first two centuries of our era; and it

**Symptoms of an Heroic Age** is therefore more reasonable to regard the 'Völkerwanderungen' when at length they begin as a symptom of the Heroic Age rather than the Heroic Age as a product of the migrations. Peoples on the whole are obstinately static if left to themselves, and behind almost every movement of the times we can detect the restless spirit of some emancipated chieftain with his band of like-minded warriors. In the words of Professor Chadwick, who



TYPICAL GERMANIC WEAPONS

The knife-like form of the 'scramasax' is seen on the left, while the axe-heads (right), for throwing as well as striking, have the typical up-tilted shape. The 'spathas' (centre) were found near the site of the Battle of Châlons, where Visigoths and Romans defeated Attila.

Nuremberg, Troyes and St. Germain Museums

compares the conditions with those depicted in the Homeric poems:

The Heroic Age, both Greek and Teutonic, presents us with the picture of a society largely free from restraint of any kind. In the higher ranks tribal law has ceased to maintain its force; and its decay leaves the individual free from obligations both to the kindred and to the community. He may disregard the bonds of kinship even to the extent of taking a kinsman's life; and he recognizes no authority beyond that of the lord whose service he has entered. The same freedom is exhibited in his attitude to the deities.

It is, of course, in princes that we find these features most strongly developed. That which they prize above all else is their ability to indulge their desires to the full—in feasting and every form of enjoyment for themselves, in unlimited generosity to their friends, in ferocious vindictiveness towards their foes. Achilles is transformed into a savage when he gets possession of the dead body of his enemy. His story furnishes a fitting parallel to that of Alboin, whose brutal

conduct brought upon him so swift a retribution. And it is to be remembered that this Alboin's generosity was a theme of poetry from Italy to England.

Proofs of this multiply from every quarter, but it is in the poetry actually surviving from this Teutonic Heroic Age that it is seen most clearly, because it gives an unselfconscious picture of the times from within instead of the objective records of Latin and Greek historians, who little understood the social significance of what they saw and suffered.

In it we clearly perceive the development of the 'comitatus' or band of young warriors attached to the king already described by Tacitus. The other notable custom recorded by him, however—that of limiting the power of the kings—has almost entirely gone. The measure of a king's power is now the prowess and loyalty of his 'comitatus,' and that loyalty he can command utterly so long as in his own person he is sufficiently generous and brave.

We see, too, the desire for personal renown and the attraction that a famous man exercises upon all who hear of his repute—Beowulf visits Hrothgar king of the Danes partly because he has heard of his generosity and the splendour of his court, and partly to win glory for himself by ridding the palace of a monster that attacks it every night and devours all whom it finds. We see the love of generosity, the love of wealth, not for the things that it can buy but for the fame that its free spending gives, as when Widsith declares: 'I have been in Italy with Alboin. No human being as far as my knowledge goes had a readier hand than had Audoin's son for the winning of praise, nor a heart more ungrudging in the distribution of rings and shining bracelets.'



#### RICH FASTENINGS THAT BEDECKED TEUTONIC GARMENTS

Teutonic dress demanded many fastenings, and fibulae are the commonest contents of the graves. They are partly descended from La Tène prototypes, partly copied from late classical models, and often executed in an Eastern spirit. The last point is especially apparent in the eagle fibulae from Ravenna (left) and Petrossa (right), both Gothic. Of those in the centre (from Szilagy Somlyo, Hungary), the right-hand one has cloisonné enamel, which both in this and its champlévé form is rarer than inlay. The buckles (top) from Kieff and Odessa are Teutonic adaptations of the fibula.

*From Professor Baldwin Brown, 'Arts and Crafts of our Teutonic Forefathers'*

In religion, the spirit is harder to trace, for the poems have gone through a process of Christianisation that has left the pagan background but excised all reference to gods by name. The first complete picture of Teutonic religion that we receive is in the far later Icelandic cycle of mythological literature, where Othin is a universal and not a tribal god, who presides over both a well regulated pantheon and a common home for the souls of the cremated dead. Now there is a certain amount of evidence that the main features of this system go back to the Heroic Age; the Saxon kings, for instance, mostly traced their pedigrees back to Woden (Othin), and Wodan with his wife Frea (Frigg) occur in the seventh-century Latin tract giving the legendary history of the Lombards, while other instances can be inferred from the identifications with Latin gods that occur even as early as Tacitus.

But on the whole the impression that we derive from Tacitus, confirmed on the one hand by the few early cult objects that survive, such as the silver sacrificial bowl from Gundestrup in Jutland, and on the other by the popular religion of the later Icelandic times, as opposed to the princely and heroic traditions of the mythology, is one of tribal gods with a restricted area of worship and a pronounced chthonian character. Hence we may say that the effect of the Heroic Age on religion, at least in the military surroundings of the chiefs, was to subordinate local cults to a universally recognized pantheon of gods—who, incidentally, were treated with no very marked respect.

Towards the end of the period we are in a better position to speak of arms and dress than heretofore, because of the growth, or resumption, of inhumation; just as inhumation was more prevalent in classical Greece than the cremation of the Homeric Age. In these graves a complete tomb equipment was buried, until the growing strictness of Christian practice put an end to it. Defensive armour was still rare—helmets and breastplates are often Roman importations and belonged, no doubt, to chiefs. Another object whose rarity



FRANK OF THE TIME OF CLOVIS

Just as the Denmark moss-bogs justify a reconstruction for the beginning of the period, so the later inhumation graves yield material from which this model of a Frankish warrior at the end of the Migration Age has been made

Mainz Museum; courtesy of Professor Baldwin Brown

shows that it was a kingly possession is the long striking sword—'spatha,' a Greek word, is the term that the Romans applied to it—but it is a distinctive weapon descending from a La Tène prototype with intermediate forms represented in the bogs of Nydam and Slesvig (see the specimen in page 2215).

The ordinary equipment is the axe, with up-tilted blade to facilitate its use as a missile weapon, and the 'scramasax' that seems to be a development from the domestic knife. It is heavy, one-edged, short and broad, average specimens measuring two feet in length and two inches from the

blade to the thickened back. Then there is the normal spear or 'framea,' as described by Tacitus, and the 'angon' that is merely an adaptation from the Roman 'pilum' (see page 1725); bows and arrows were known and used.

Men and women wore much the same sort of cloak, but fastened in a different way, for in the graves of men the fibulae occur singly, in those of the women in pairs. The fibulae are of innumerable, mostly derivative, forms. Buckles, however, were seemingly a Teutonic development from the fibula; they were used all over the person, large heavy ones for the waist-belt and smaller ones for fastening at the knee the criss-cross straps that confined the lower parts of the 'bracae' or breeches. Rings on neck, arm and fingers were all worn—one recalls the ring Sviagris that figures in the Danish and Swedish dynastic legends.

The art, as one might expect, shows strong Roman influence, but this is not overpowering and one must concede much to the native genius. What seems to have distinguished it from late classical art on the one hand and its La Tène prototypes on the other is influence from an unexpected quarter—the East—manifesting itself in a love of coloured inlay, though true enamel work is rare. The so-called Petrossa treasure, found at Buzeu in Rumania and consisting of gold dishes, fibulae and basket-like vessels, shows it; so does the eighth-century treasure with its mixture of late classical, oriental and barbaric motives unearthed at Nagy Szent Miklos in Hungary.

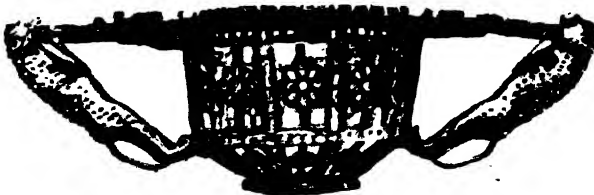
The Petrossa treasure is probably late

third century A.D. and may be referred to the Visigoths who then occupied the region; and it is to the Goths, who from their long residence on the Black Sea were well placed for absorbing elements from the East, that we can assign the credit for disseminating the national traits in Germanic art. But it may be that Eastern influence had begun its work much earlier; for one thing there are open plains all the way from the Baltic to the Caucasus, and the sexagesimal system latent in North German numerals (see page 328) hints at prehistoric intercourse with the East; for another, though the affinities of the art are largely Sassanian, one cannot help being struck with the similarity in workmanship between many objects and such earlier Persian gold-work as is illustrated in page 1131 (top).

There remains the question of the Runic alphabet, or 'futhorc' as it should be called—a word formed of its first six letters. For this too the Goths were probably responsible, being in a position to choose both from the Latin alphabet and from the Ionian form of the Greek alphabet current on the northern coasts of the Black Sea and in Thrace. Thence it would be disseminated to the rest of the Germans by the routes round the back of the Carpathians. The forms of its original twenty-four letters show that it was devised for carving on wood, but naturally hardly anything in this material has survived; there is one lance-shaft found in the moss-bogs of Kragehul in Fyn, which, with those of Nydam and Torsbjaerg, yield the earliest inscribed objects from the north of Europe (third century

A.D.). Germany itself is curiously deficient; but from the south comes a gold ring, part of the Petrossa treasure, which may bear the earliest known inscription. It has been translated 'Sacred to the Temple of the Goths'; and the suggestion has been made that it was part of the spoil dedicated after the defeat of Decius.

Thus early were the Germans transmuting the civilization of the south to their own ends.



#### VESSEL ONCE BRIGHT WITH ORIENTAL INLAY

The interstices of this gold vessel, found in a hoard near Petrossa, in Hungary, and dating from the fourth or perhaps as early as the third century B.C., were once filled with gems and transparent coloured inlay. It is Gothic work; and the animal-handles and the general love of colour that it reveals are strongly suggestive of Eastern influence.

From A. Odobesco, 'Le trésor de Petrossa'



# DECAY OF THE WESTERN POWER AND ITS CAUSES

The inward Reasons of the Decline that  
left Europe a Prey to Barbarian Invaders

By NORMAN H. BAYNES

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**I**N his monk's cell at Bethlehem in the year 410 S. Jerome had begun to dictate his commentary on the Book of Ezekiel when the news came that the City of Rome had fallen into the hands of Alaric the Goth. 'My mind was so confounded,' he writes, 'that, as the saying goes, I could not remember my own name. For a long time I did not speak a word; I knew that this was a time for tears.' 'The city which had taken the world captive had itself been captured.'

To the Romans of that day the fall of Rome presented a problem: how was it to be explained? The convinced pagan had no hesitation: the greatness of Rome had been based upon loyalty to the religion of Rome—upon the scrupulous observance of those traditional rites which had been handed down from the period of the early kings. 'It was in Christian times that Rome had fallen.' This was the punishment of national apostasy.

The Christian also was convinced that in the fall of Rome he could trace a divine punishment for sin. It was the vices of a Christian world which had brought disaster upon the Empire; let men comprehend the lesson which God would teach them through this divine discipline. The charge which the pagan levelled against the Christian inspired a majestic defence—Augustine's City of God, which is the crown and climax of the long development of Christian apologetic.

But Alaric spent only three days in Rome; he marched to the south of Italy and was contemplating the passage to Africa when he died; the Goths continued their wanderings and entered Gaul. The capture of Rome might well seem but one

more defeat in that long story of Roman reverses which had time and again been wiped out in Roman victory. Only a few years after Alaric's entry into the Western capital a pagan poet could contemplate the future of the Empire with unshaken confidence; Rutilius Namatianus, called back from Rome to his native Gaul, can hardly tear himself away from the city 'which had made diverse peoples a single fatherland'; Alaric could not break in a day the faith which was based upon the history of a thousand years. To us it will always appear strange that the fall of Rome has left so slight an impress upon the literature of the fifth century; we seem to trace a conspiracy of silence among the Roman writers of the period. We shall only begin to understand the outlook of the contemporaries of Alaric when we have tried to put the capture of Rome into its historical setting, when we know something of the life and the thought of the time.

The fourth century is a century of transition; that is a truism which has been repeated so often that at times we fail to realize **Fourth century a transitional period** how true it is; we are so accustomed to regard Constantine as the founder of the Christian Empire that we are apt to underestimate the strength of paganism in the Roman world; we know the issue of the struggle between the older faith and the new creed, and thus we antedate the triumph of Christianity. We write our history from the imperial edicts which proscribed the pagan worship, but the very violence of the language of those edicts and their constant repetition should



give us pause ; these are the challenges of men who know that they are fighting a battle against a living tradition ; they are not the assured decrees issued after an unquestioned triumph.

From Constantinople, the Empire's Eastern capital, Constantius, the son and successor of Constantine the Great, had sought as a Christian sovereign to hasten the triumph of the religion that he professed ; in the East Christianity was strong, and Christian victory seemed within his grasp. When late in his life

Constantius visited Rome, the majesty of Rome and the compelling power of a historic tradition took a Christian emperor captive ; the effect of that visit is reflected in the temper of imperial legislation during the following years ; Constantius had learnt a lesson, his precipitate zeal was chastened. The pagan reaction of Julian the Apostate was followed, not by a reinforcement of the legislation of Constantius, but by an edict of toleration, and in the western provinces of the Empire Valentinian I consistently followed the same policy.

It was only with Theodosius the Great that the Empire finally adopted orthodox Christianity as the religion of the Roman state, and still that state entrusted to pagans its most responsible posts alike in the army and the civil administration. The Roman Senate charged its foremost representatives to plead with the emperor for the retention in the Senate House of the Altar of Victory, the symbol of Rome's pagan past ; even under Theodosius I the Christian senators of Rome can hardly have been in the majority ; from the legislation of his reign it is clear that many Christians were lapsing into paganism. The tradition was not dead.

But that negative statement is quite inadequate ; the great literary tradition of the classical world was throughout the Empire the common possession alike of Christian and of pagan. The most intolerable act of Julian the Apostate was his exclusion of Christian teachers from the schools ; even Ammianus Marcellinus, the warm admirer of Julian the Apostate, condemned the measure—it should be buried in eternal silence. Augustine was

a Platonist before he was a Christian, and the dialogues which were written after his conversion are formed on the Platonic model ; Jerome sought in vain to free himself from the spell of Cicero's eloquence, while Ambrose refashioned to Christian uses Cicero's ethical treatises. It is only occasionally and with painful effort that a poet like Ausonius remembers that he is a Christian. To sever oneself from the tradition was, indeed, to cut oneself loose from the culture in which both pagan and Christian had been schooled. That Roman literary inheritance was never more strenuously cultivated or more closely studied than among the Roman aristocrats of the time of Theodosius the Great. The writings of Macrobius preserve the memory of their discussions, of their critical appreciations, of their loving intimacy with the masterpieces of Roman literature, above all with Vergil. In these circles the appeal of the Roman tradition was consciously and assiduously fostered.

As modern students of this period of transition we read the literature of controversy, and from it we recover the bitterness of the religious struggle ; we read less often the private letters which have been preserved. We sometimes forget that Christian and pagan, despite this religious controversy, were

bound to each other by **Friendship between Christian & Pagan** ties of personal friendship ; that an Ambrose

and a Symmachus—the Christian and the pagan champion—could respect each other and could maintain a correspondence which was untroubled by religious differences. We are at times at a loss to understand these intimate relations until we remember how in our own day statesmen can assail each other in the sphere of politics, while their private friendships remain unaffected by their public disagreements. The cleft between pagan and Christian in the fourth century was no impassable gulf ; there was still a common ground on which they could meet, and that ground was the common inheritance from a Roman past.

Indeed it is at this time that men seem as never before to become conscious of the historic achievement of Rome ; while,

since the Empire had become a Christian Empire, the Christian no less than the pagan would claim his part in that achievement. Rutilius Namatianus, the pagan poet, could write in his apostrophe of Rome that she had made the world a single city, while Claudian in majestic lines, here quoted from Professor Phillimore's translation, could tell how

Alone she gathers to her bosom those  
Whom late she vanquished: citizens, not  
foes,  
She calls them now. Their conqueror they  
proclaim  
Mother—not mistress. So her general name  
Enfellowships mankind, makes fast, with  
bands  
Of love devout, the far-off daughter lands  
That, whereso'er we range, 'tis all one race—  
Debtors to her by whose peace-making grace  
No place is strange, but everywhere a home—  
One world-wide family all akin with Rome.

To Orosius, the Christian apologist of the fifth century, Rome still stands unshaken; everywhere throughout her Empire he can find his fatherland and his religion; wherever he goes, as a Roman and a Christian he will find Romans and Christians.

If the Christian and the pagan can find common ground on which to meet, so there is no sharp line of cleavage fixed

between the Roman  
and the barbarian.  
**Vanishing hostility**  
**of Roman & Barbarian** After the chaos of  
the third century  
the Empire had reasserted its unity and  
its power: it could now absorb the barbarian and could employ him for Roman ends. Constantine gave to the barbarians high commands in the Roman armies, and it was in and through the Roman army that the barbarian first made good his footing in the Roman state.

To men schooled in the tradition of Rome, convinced that Rome's past was a pledge for her future, to men who had seen so many enemies humbled and accepting Rome's behests, it was not unnatural that the capture of Rome should seem but a passing incident, that men should think that, once the Goth had retired from Italian soil, all would go on as before. But that hope was not to be realized. Between the barbarian conquerors of Roman provinces and the barbarian king-makers Roman power in the

west of Europe steadily declined. It is this decline of the Roman power in the West that we are to study here.

But, at the outset, there is one fact which creates for the student of the history of western Europe in the fifth century a peculiar difficulty. No record of that history exists, and there is no reason to suppose that any such record will ever be recovered. It is, indeed, very doubtful whether there ever existed such a record. For though contemporaries wrote much, they would seem to have been peculiarly shy of attempting to write history. For, as Apollinaris Sidonius explains in one of his letters, there are periods when the writing of history is a dangerous pursuit for any man who tries to tell the truth; discretion bids you devote your literary energies to the less perilous pastime of corresponding with your friends. An anonymous satire, if imputed to you, may, as Sidonius found, cause you no little inconvenience at court; but should a Roman have attempted to speak his mind about the all-powerful barbarian master of the soldiery of his day, it would probably have been his last indiscretion.

Thus the only histories of the period which the modern student possesses are chronicles incredibly meagre, disappointing beyond belief, which hardly ever give an answer to the most elementary of those problems which must first be solved before a history of the period can be written. And for Italy during this century, when once Claudian's poetry fails the student in the first decade, he cannot supplement these chronicles from other sources; for Gaul he has the correspondence of Apollinaris Sidonius, and consequently he can sketch the daily life of the Gallo-Roman aristocrat; but that correspondence takes singularly little notice either of the barbarian menace or of imperial policy. Other provinces hardly count in the history of the decline of the Roman power in the West; for Britain was abandoned by the Roman legions about A.D. 407 (see Chronicle XIII), Africa was in the occupation of the Vandals, while, in Spain, Rome with difficulty held a fraction of her former

**Lack of Fifth  
Century History**

conquests. It was in Gaul and Italy that the struggle was waged, and between them close contact was long maintained.

In Gaul, amidst the Gallo-Roman aristocracy, there was the same conscious preservation of the Roman tradition as in the capital itself, and that tradition was so clearly defined and so uniform, it had been cultivated with such energy in the Gallic schools of rhetoric during the fourth century, that the picture of the provincial aristocracy as drawn for us by Sidonius can doubtless

**Cultured Society** be regarded in most of its  
**in Roman Gaul** features as truly representative of Roman culture in the fifth century of our era. If then the modern student reads the correspondence of Sidonius—and he will do that far more easily in O. M. Dalton's delightful translation than in the tortured Latin of the original—he will find there a society of very wealthy landed proprietors, living in ease on their great estates, devoting their days to hunting, to games of ball and chance, to reading of the classics and to the enjoyments of the table. They keep open house, they delight in paying visits, they spend ungrudging pains on letters where art makes no effort to conceal artistry. The writer keeps copies of his letters; they may later be published in a collected edition. He may apologise for the rusticity of his style; if he encloses an epigram or a poem, he will almost certainly ask you to amend its faults, but he would be bitterly offended, doubtless, if you were imprudent enough to take him at his word.

We can outline the general course of his life. As a youth he goes to one of the famous schools of Gaul to study grammar and rhetoric; in after days he will be bound by close ties of friendship to those who were once his fellow-students. He marries young, and his bride will bring with her an estate to swell the family wealth; he becomes a father of four or five children, for these Gallic nobles are a vigorous stock, and here there is no fear of race suicide. He will interest himself in his boy's education and will read with him the Latin classics—Terence, Sallust and above all Vergil; he will even rub up his Greek to help his son. While still a

young man he will obtain a provincial governorship in the imperial civil service, he may even rise to the proud position of prefect of the city in Rome, as did Sidonius, or he may become praetorian prefect, governing many provinces. At forty he will return to his home estates in Gaul and spend the rest of his days in luxurious leisure amongst his friends.

The Gallo-Roman noble is interested in the cultivation of his estate, he is always planning some enlargement of his house; even when the Gothic kingdom is established in southern France, that settlement after the confusion of the early days would seem to have made but little difference to his life. Some of his friends might enter the service of the Gothic court; but most of these Roman aristocrats had only occasional dealings with the barbarian invader. Sidonius does not disguise his dislike and scorn of the Germans. In the Gaul of the fifth century the towns were shrinking within their newly-raised fortifications; trade and manufacture which had flour- **Shrinking trade**  
ished under the early **kills the towns**  
Empire were stagnant; brigandage made communications insecure for one who was not protected by a bodyguard of attendants. The aristocrat only went to the city for Eastertide or some other great Christian festival, yet it was in the towns of Gaul that a new power was arising—the Church; and there was one claim which might recall even the noble to the town—the claim that he should assume the burden of a bishopric. For while some bishops came from the monastery and carried into the town the life of the ascetic, there was always room for the aristocrat who would place his wealth and dignity at the service of the Church. It was thus that Sidonius became a bishop.

From the correspondence of Sidonius we should not judge that this Gallo-Roman aristocracy was a vicious or immoral class: they are lovers of sport and of the open air; their chief pride, however, if the evidence of these letters may be trusted, is in the maintenance of a literary tradition, in the study and, as they fondly thought, in the imitation of the Latin classics. What strikes the

modern reader of this correspondence is the curious remoteness of these men from the political and economic life of their day; and already that remoteness is beginning to tell: even the guardianship of a literary tradition is failing.

The establishment of the Gothic kingdom has tended to cut them off from contact with the world without; the countryside is turning them into rustic farmers. The culture of Rome had ever found its centre in the towns, and there it had been sustained by constant communication with Rome. When the Roman noble became a subject of the Goth, the current of life from Rome and to Rome ceased to flow; the noble had abandoned the town; when he became marooned in the country and absorbed in local interests, a literary tradition which had long been cultivated like a hot-house plant withered in his hands. Culture was overwhelmed in rusticity. The Gaul of Gregory of Tours is already in the making.

Such is the pacifism of the noble; for the condition of the middle classes and of the humbler folk of the Roman Empire we shall find but little evidence in the correspondence of Sidonius: how was it that from these too the barbarian found so little resistance? To give any answer to that question we must recall something of that development of the Roman power in western Europe which has been treated from various standpoints in Chapters 65, 70 and 77, and in Chronicles X to XII.

When Augustus, the founder of the Roman Empire, put an end to the era of civil war in which the old Republican constitution perished, men everywhere were sighing for an age of peace and security. Augustus satisfied their desire: he not only restored domestic peace, but, when he had rounded off the frontiers of the Roman world, he determined that the policy of expansion should be abandoned once and for all. It is part of the tribute which his successors paid to the statesmanship of Augustus that they remained loyal to this determination. Augustus, disbanding the swollen armaments of the period of the civil wars, created the modest defensive force of the early Empire. Behind the

shield of these frontier armies the civil life of the provinces was free to develop in its urban centres which were themselves knit together and kept in touch with the heart of the Empire through the great highways which Rome had built. The task of the defence of the provincials was assumed by the central government.

But this was not all: in the first century of our era an imperial religion—the worship of Rome and of the Emperor—gave to the provincials an expression for their conviction that Rome was the one efficient stay of law and order, as well as the source of that

civilization which, though it was not forced upon them by

**Dangers of a too paternal government**

the conqueror, they were perhaps for that very reason the more anxious to acquire. The republican policy of *laissez-faire* was abandoned, and the agents of the central government were only too ready to direct, control or over-rule local initiative. The intentions of the emperors were excellent, but the benefits of paternal government were bought at a price: self-help was at a discount, and a citizen's generosity might well be checked by imperial interference. The danger lay in the development of a psychology of dependence: what if the imperial ravens failed in their task?

That failure of the central power came in the second half of the third century. Under Marcus Aurelius the Empire had successfully repulsed its foes, since the attacks upon the Danube and the Euphrates frontiers were not contemporaneous: troops from the north could be moved to the east and subsequently again transferred to Europe. But under Gallienus the simultaneous attack upon all frontiers broke down the barriers and chaos ensued. The restoration when it came was the work of the central government, and to meet the crisis a complete administrative and military reorganization was carried through by Diocletian and Constantine. Everything was at stake, and the demands made upon the Roman world were heavy.

A new spirit pervades this fourth century reorganization. The early Empire had proved itself adaptable in its methods and tolerant of local diversity: now under the

**Peace the gift of Augustus**

Republican constitution perished, men everywhere were sighing for an age of peace

constraint of iron necessity uniformity is everywhere enforced, and alike in the military and administrative sphere a single system is rigorously imposed. It is true that this system did during the fourth century sustain the defence of the frontiers, that it succeeded in holding the Roman world together, but after the crisis of the third century it is easy to understand that in the view of the government the state and its interests were paramount. Before the claims of the state the rights of the individual citizen appeared of small account: he and his must be dragooned into the service of a pitiless Frankenstein. More than ever before all energies were now enslaved to the state, and public life and public initiative had no scope for any freedom of development.

The effect of this prodigious concentration of resources in the hands of the central administration

**All resources in government hands** can hardly be over-estimated. It accentuated among the provincials the psychology of dependence which the paternalism of the early Empire had fostered. The emperors in refusing to their subjects the right to bear arms were only pursuing the same policy: the subject paid his taxes, and the state assumed the entire responsibility for his defence. 'It is our care,' writes an emperor of the fifth century, 'to make provision for the welfare of the human race. For this is our constant aim by day and night that all who live under our rule shall be defended by our arms from the assaults of the foe, that in peace they shall enjoy untroubled ease and security.'

As we study the poor fragments of evidence which we possess for the history of the Roman defence of Gaul we are struck by the fact, not only that the Roman armies were captained by barbarians, but that those captains were constantly straining every nerve to enlist barbarians in the Roman service. There is hardly a trace of the employment of provincials in the defence of the western provinces. Now it is true that here our sources may produce a false impression, but it would seem more probable that they do really mirror one of the essential features of that desperate struggle. It is

astonishing how little effective resistance would seem to have been offered to the barbarian advance by any force other than that of the imperial army.

The great need of Aetius, whose career is outlined in Chronicle XIII, is obviously man-power: to make good this need he employs any barbarian force within his reach—Hun or Goth, it matters not. The provincial levies are too unimportant to be mentioned; we are not told that it even occurred to the Roman general to rely upon their help. Gaul in the fourth century had furnished the Empire with its most trusted and valued soldiers. When a serious war with Persia was threatening, it was to Julian's Gallic troops that Constantius looked for support. In the fifth century it is in Auvergne alone that we find any resolute resistance of the provincial to the Gothic invader, and even here counsels were divided, and it needed all the efforts of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy to maintain that resistance. When Lyons initiates a revolt, it relies upon the help of Burgundian troops. It certainly looks as though Roman rule had broken the military spirit of Gaul; Gaul had sheltered itself under the protection of the Empire: it had lost the power to organize its own defence.

The fact that the Roman state had assumed these vast responsibilities was the justification for its claims upon the life and property of the subject. The largely increased military forces of the Empire, the **Cost of heavy vast hierarchy of the responsibilities** constituted civil administration, the studied magnificence of the imperial court were each and all excessively costly. Outside the favoured classes of the imperial senators or of those enrolled in the state service, the subject comes to be regarded primarily as a tax-payer; his every effort to escape from his burdensome obligations must be forestalled. He must be shackled to his task, while his children must be held to the same duty by the fetters of hereditary compulsion; they are doomed from birth to bear their father's burden.

The Empire must feed its administrators, must clothe its soldiers; but the Roman state is unwilling to pay in hard

cash for supplies or for services rendered ; it seeks to satisfy its needs without payment. It therefore commandeers the services of the trade guilds, it subjects the lives of sailor, trader, merchant or ship-owner to its own imperious will ; here, too, it resorts to its favourite expedient of hereditary obligation, and by way of what is really a tax in kind it procures goods or supplies without sacrificing its coined bullion (see page 1236). These two features everywhere characterise the action of this fourth century state : its search for security, pledges, guarantees, and its determination to satisfy its needs without payment, by exacting from its subjects a render in kind for which it is not compelled to make monetary return.

The application of the principle of an hereditary burden which the subject by the mere fact of birth is forced to assume is perhaps the most striking instance of this search for a guarantee, for a pledge that the claims of the state will be duly met. Under the early Empire municipal office had been regarded as an honourable distinction, but now, when the state rendered municipal councillors individually liable for the taxes which it was their duty to collect, the office of councillor became a ruinous obligation from which men sought by any and every means to escape.

If farms were not tilled, there would be no revenues from which the land tax could be paid : therefore farms must be tilled, and thus labourers ('coloni') must be bound to the estate which they cultivated, for, in a world where the supply of labour was inadequate, to carry off a workman was to carry off the crops which his toil could have produced, and thus to carry off the taxes upon those crops which the state could have exacted. Further, the colonus was subject to conscription, and, if he were permitted freedom of movement, he might not be at his place when the Empire desired to enrol recruits. Thus the Roman state of the fourth century issued its successive statutes of labourers and its brutal edicts against the members of the municipal senates.

At the same time the burden of the regular taxation was indefinitely increased

by the imposition of enforced labour on the state's behalf. Thus in Constantinople bread was publicly distributed to the holders of bread-tickets ; the corn from which that bread was made was grown in Egypt—it was compulsorily acquired by the government as part of the taxes paid by the Egyptians ; it was carried to Constantinople under compulsion by the shippers of Alexandria ; it was compulsorily baked by the guild of bakers in the capital, while shipper and baker with their children were bound to membership of their corporation. Pledges, security, guarantees : safety first—the government would take no risks.

Yet, though the government asked so much of its subjects, it must not infrequently have seemed to men to give but a poor return for all their sacrifices. For, if the subject had lost all power of controlling the state, the state itself was often unable to control its agents. Special emissary might follow special emissary, each charged to give the sovereign a faithful account of the manner in which the civil service was carrying out its duties ; but the tongue of each was silenced by timely bribes, and only chance revealed to an unsuspecting monarch the enormities of which his servants had been guilty. 'Defenders'—'defensores'—were appointed by the government to protect the citizens from the rapacity of the tax-collectors, but such an appointment probably only meant that the citizens were burdened by the maintenance of yet another official.

A constitution of A.D. 409 can bid the injured tax-payer apply for justice to the defensor, to his municipal senate, to the magistrates, and then, if each and all have failed, he is directed in the presence of the government clerks and administrative staff to post up his complaint in the public places of the municipality. To such a pass has come the central government of the Empire whose ceaseless care it is to provide for the welfare of the human race. 'The best of emperors is sold.' In that bitter comment a contemporary of Julian the Apostate summed up the tragedy of an emperor's good intentions.

The citizen of the middle classes whose possession of twenty-five acres of farmland dooms him to membership of the municipal senate, terrified by the arrears to the treasury for which he himself is personally liable, seeks the protection of some large landed proprietor whose influence may shield him from the state's agents. The peasants will make friends with the soldiers garrisoned in the neighbourhood so that they may be supported by military force in defying the demands of their landlord. The small proprietor will surrender his estate to a wealthy landowner and become his servant, that he may enjoy the 'patronage' of the powerful, and gain security at the price of his personal freedom. That surrender of property may not even be a voluntary act, for everywhere the large land holder is seeking to 'round off' his estate by the absorption of the property of smaller men.

Both the municipal councillor—the 'curial'—and the peasant, if no other avenue of escape be open, will seek relief in flight—the curial flying to the army or to the Church, the peasant to brigandage, each knowing that any day, if he is caught, he will be haled back to his task. Even for the wealthy curial there is no relief: the state bars his entry into the favoured class of imperial senators who are free from obligations to the municipal senates. The curials are 'the sinews of the commonwealth'; they are devoted to their office; they are 'as it were dedicated with sacred fillets, they must guard the eternal mystery: to withdraw from it is an act of impiety.' They cannot leave their town without permission; without permission they cannot alienate their property. The shades of the prison house have closed about them.

This effort of the municipal councillor and the peasant to find a patron is the precise parallel on the part of the subject to those efforts of the state which we have just been considering. The individual, like the state, is seeking for security, for guarantees. It is an evil day when the citizen is reduced to a choice between flight or the protection of the strong arm

against the violence of the state's representatives; 'patronage' is a striking condemnation of a government which had failed to maintain that rule of law which it so proudly professed.

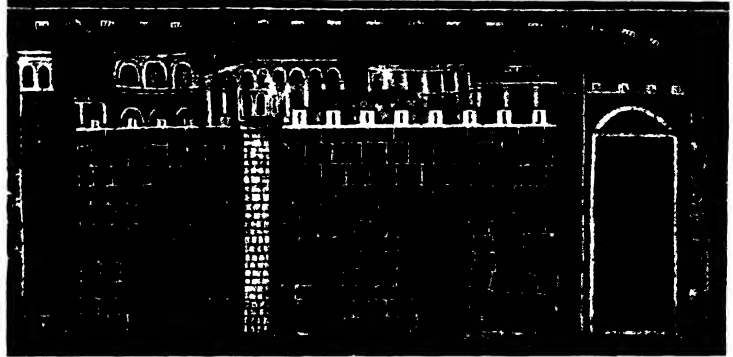
The common folk of the Roman Empire have left behind them no picture of their sufferings drawn by one of their own class; it is to the admissions of the imperial constitutions that we must turn if we would seek to reconstruct the tragedy of their obscure misery. Those admissions are reinforced by the evidence of Salvian, a presbyter of Marseilles, who in his work, *On the Governance of God*, stood forth as champion and apologist of the oppressed. Salvian states that not a few of the provincials welcomed the barbarians, expecting from them an alleviation of the ills from which they suffered. Salvian is a rhetorician, an ecclesiastic pointing a moral: the gloomy jeremiads of ecclesiastics are ever suspect as historical sources. But here it may well be that Salvian is speaking the truth. It can have been little that the oppressed coloni gained from Roman culture, while upon their shoulders rested the burden of the Empire's taxation.

Our scanty evidence suggests that often they had passed from dull hopelessness to sheer desperation. The peasant brigands in Gaul who had organized themselves into bands of such strength that they could defy the imperial forces, the similar troops of 'circumcelliones' in North Africa who supported the Donatist sectaries, are signs of the times which can hardly be mistaken. When Egyptian peasants consider a flight into the desert more tolerable than their present state, this fact alone would point to the same conclusion. In sheer despair the peasant had determined that nothing could be worse than his present lot. The barbarian could not maintain the complicated network of the Roman fiscal system, so that for many his arrival must have appeared as the bursting open of the prison house. It is only in this setting of utter despondency that we can fully understand the immense difficulties encountered by the Roman state in its efforts to keep the peasant to his task.



Such is the social background of the decline of the Roman power in western Europe. For conditions in Italy itself we have but little evidence, but during the three centuries which lay between the founding of the Empire and the administrative reorganization of Diocletian it had become increasingly clear that the city of Rome was no longer the centre of the Mediterranean world. The Western capital had never been a manufacturing city: it had grown rich on the tribute of the provinces and on the spoils of the Greek East. When Rome was constrained to purchase the luxuries which came from the Orient, the Greek cities of the eastern Mediterranean took their revenge upon their conqueror; since Italy's manufactures were inadequate, the West

a blow to the imperial prestige of Rome, it was also a serious economic loss, when in 330 Constantine permanently fixed both the court and the central administration of the Empire in the city which he had founded on the Bosphorus. That economic loss is only illustrated by the fact that the corn of Egypt was now diverted from the Western capital, and went henceforth to feed the populace of Constantinople. Even when an emperor



RAVENNA IN THE DAYS WHEN IT HAD OUSTED ROME

We can dimly see what a blow to sentiment and tradition it must have been when Rome, the Sacred City worshipped as a goddess in rites that unified the Empire, had yielded its capital status to Constantinople in the East, to Trèves, Milan, Ravenna in the West. Theodoric the Ostrogoth fixed his residence at Ravenna, long the capital of Honorius and Galla Placidia; these mosaics in S. Apollinare Nuovo show the walls and gate of Classis, seaport of Ravenna (top), and the palace of Theodoric.

*Photos, Alinari*

had perforce to make good in payments of specie the adverse trade balance. Even as early as the second century of our era imperial charitable foundations would suggest that already the prosperity of the Italian middle classes was on the decline. Wealth was in the hands of the merchants of Alexandria and of Antioch. The economic tide was ebbing eastwards.

The court of the emperor followed that ebb-tide: Diocletian for a time made Nicomedia his capital. It was not merely

shared the rule of the Roman world with a Western colleague, Rome was no longer an imperial residence. Trèves, Milan and Ravenna became successively the homes of the Western sovereign. The city where the emperor resided had a prior claim upon the revenues of the Empire: Trèves and Ravenna still preserve their memorials of imperial favour.

In the early years of the fifth century the Gothic invasion spread devastation and confusion in Italy; there was wide-



spread insecurity throughout the countryside, where broken men and deserters from the army swelled the brigand gangs. Edicts threatening capital punishment were of little avail, and in 416 the government was constrained to issue a general amnesty in favour of those whom barbarian inroad and the fear

**Devastation of rural Italy** of death had driven into crime. In the south of Italy large districts were

given over to shepherds and herdsmen; here their occupation would seem to have been almost synonymous with brigandage; against the brigand the subject was even permitted the use of arms. It is no wonder that in this general insecurity agriculture declined, that Campanian fields lay uncultivated, and that the government was forced to remit the exaction of the land-tax. There is every reason to believe that, as in Gaul, so in Italy, trade was stagnant, while the capture of Carthage by the Vandals only added to the economic depression; for many years Vandal fleets held the mastery of the sea, sea-borne trade was brought to a standstill, and the connexions which linked the western Mediterranean to the Aegean were snapped.

After the fall of Stilicho (408), when the Catholic party was in the ascendant, an imperial constitution excluded all pagans from the service of the state. Those who remained loyal to their convictions were doomed to inactivity. How far that religious antithesis may have influenced the thought of those who would naturally have controlled the destinies of Italy and the western provinces we do not know, but it may well have caused many to withdraw into private life and to withhold their services from the state. The tide had set against the old tradition for which they stood, and a note of resignation can be traced in the pagan literature of the period. The Christian bishop and the barbarian soldier are the leaders of the age. Above all, power rested with the barbarian masters of the soldiers, 'those saviours of the Empire,' to quote Mommsen, 'who were the Empire's ruin.'

If the master of the soldiery, supported by the army under his command, chose to defy his sovereign, what could an

emperor do? He had no resource save assassination. That is the pitiable condition to which Honorius sank in his later years. For an emperor who was not himself a general the barbarian commander was indispensable: to appoint him was easy, but once appointed the barbarian was master of the situation; the emperor was powerless; he could not withdraw his commission. Aetius, fighting the battles of the Empire in Gaul, is thus practically independent of the Western court; it is he who determines imperial policy in the West.

These are the conditions under which the Empire wages its struggle against the barbarian invader. The details of that struggle will be found elsewhere, in *Chronicle XIII*; we are here concerned with the problem, why in the end it was unsuccessful, why did barbarian kingdoms planted on Roman soil take the place of the direct rule of Rome? For that decline of Roman authority in the West many different explanations have been advanced.

Some would see in racial degeneration the cause of the decline of the Roman power. In the early Empire Greek slaves had been brought to the West in great numbers; these were often highly educated, the trusted advisers, even the friends of their masters.

It was these men rather than the slaves on the large estates who would

be emancipated by their owners, and on emancipation would obtain the Roman citizenship. Even in the first century of our era Rome must have been to a larger extent than we commonly conceive a Greek city: Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in Greek, and Greek was the language of the early liturgy of the Christian Church of Rome. Eastern merchants and traders were constantly travelling from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, and many doubtless settled in the West. The Syrian emperors of the third century brought with them to Italy not a few of their compatriots. A mongrel race must have been the consequence of this Eastern immigration, and the Empire therefore declined because the Romans were no longer Roman.

The theory has recently been restated at length by Nilsson, and it is well that we should be reminded of this flow of Easterners to the western Mediterranean. But it may be doubted whether the theory provides an adequate explanation for the great transition which we are considering. The Western aristocracy of the fourth and fifth centuries is surely not as a class an aristocracy of Greek parvenus: the great senatorial houses of Rome have a long and a Roman past. Especially in the fourth century it is difficult to believe that Greek influence was strong in the West, for it is precisely in this century that Italy is ceasing to be bilingual and that Latin is becoming the sole language of the western world. The cultivation of distinctively Roman traditions by the leaders of Western culture is, as we have seen, an outstanding feature of the period.

But it is another consideration which increases the difficulty of attributing to Greek influence the decline of the western power: it was precisely where Greek influence was strongest—in the eastern provinces of the Empire—that the continuity with the past was maintained, that the menace

of barbarian supremacy was averted, that the Greek influence was not the reason Graeco-Roman tradition was preserved for another millennium. The student who has any familiarity with the surprising rebirths from chaos and anarchy of the Eastern Roman Empire will be perhaps less readily convinced that the Eastern element in the Roman population of the West had so large a responsibility for the failure of the Roman opposition to the barbarian. It might perhaps be suggested that certain widespread misconceptions of Byzantine history have contributed in no small degree to the popularity of this theory.

Many scholars have sought to explain the decline on economic grounds; a favourite explanation is that of the exhaustion of the soil. The Romans, it is contended, failed to make good the essential chemical elements which were drawn from the soil by continuous cultivation, and thus the farmer found ever greater difficulty in winning a livelihood from his land. But, if this theory may hold good

for Greece and for parts of Italy, there is very little evidence for it elsewhere, and it fails to explain the decay and desertion of whole villages in Egypt where it was always possible to renew the fertility of land by irrigation. In Gaul of the fourth and the fifth century agriculture was flourishing under the personal supervision of the landed aristocracy.

In the last century there were some scholars who regarded the triumph of Christianity as one of the principal causes of the decline of the Roman

power. This charge against Christianity is as old as Augustine, but its falsity is

Part played by Christianity

now generally recognized. Not only had the Christian Church given a new and religious sanction to the authority of the Caesars, not only did it support by its influence every effort of the emperors to reform administrative abuses so that the bishops were granted large powers of civil jurisdiction, but the Church, on the impoverishment of the Roman state, was the one organization which possessed alike the desire and the resources to aid the destitute and to support those who through famine or barbarian invasion were threatened with death.

In a world where the old literary tradition of classic paganism was ever growing more artificial and further removed from spontaneous vigour, it was the Church that turned the rhetoric of the schools into a vehicle for a living message of comfort and hope. While the Roman power was declining in western Europe the Church was building up an organization which should outlive the Empire; it was preparing itself for the day when on the triumph of the barbarous Frank it would stand as the heir of Roman traditions, as the one force which would in some measure control the tyranny of military dominance.

It is true that the ascetic enthusiasm which had been kindled by the stories of Egyptian solitaries was withdrawing men from the world to the seclusion of the monasteries, but it may well be doubted whether the withdrawal of the religious enthusiasts from political life did any greater injury to the Empire than the withdrawal of the noble to the cultured

ease of his country villa. At least it was rather with the monasteries than with the villas of Gaul that the future lay. For in the possession of the Church was the hope of a City of God which would remain when the City of Rome had dropped the reins of government.

Rather it is in the Empire's dependence on the barbarian soldier that we should trace the deepest reason for the failure of the imperial defence. To retain the services of barbarian allies it was essential to pay them generously, and the Western Empire was poor: it could not raise the funds necessary for the maintenance of its fleet and its army. It was only able to do this when it received financial help from Constantinople. This is the fundamental fact: the Roman state in the West could not do more because it could not meet the bill. This explanation is brutally simple, but often the simplest explanations are nearest to the truth.

Recall to yourselves once again the plight of the Roman Empire in the West: Britain evacuated, Spain laid waste, Africa fallen to the Vandal, the mastery of the sea lost, the richest part of France in the

possession of the Goth, Gaul beyond the boundaries of the Gothic kingdom, now disputed territory, where Aetius was fighting the Hun—whence should the Roman state acquire the means wherewith to repel her foes? Rome in the West possessed no reserves upon which she could draw to make good the constant drain upon her resources. Individuals of the Roman aristocracy were rich, but the Roman state was on the verge of bankruptcy: it could not pay the price of empire.

The year 476, when the last Roman emperor of the West was dethroned, has sometimes been spoken of as the fall of the Roman Empire. That is, of course, an abuse of language: all that happened was that the emperor ruling in Constantinople was now sole sovereign, the imperial authority previously exercised by Romulus Augustulus reverted to his colleague, who thus became the ruler alike of the Roman West and of the Roman East; there was in theory of state no constitutional change. The emperor

might entrust the government of Italy to a barbarian lieutenant as his representative, but this was not to surrender the imperial title to the governance of the west of Europe. It is important to remember this Roman theory, for otherwise Justinian's reconquest of Italy from the Goth can never be understood.

But it is still true that though the year 476 was marked by the fall of no empire, it did yet inaugurate an important change in the history of the

Roman lands in the West. **Significance of the Year 476**  
The government of Theodoric the Goth in its civil

administration maintained the Roman tradition, but that tradition, even in the civil sphere, was not maintained without difficulty, while the foreign policy of Theodoric was a Gothic policy, and was not dictated by Rome. The reorganization of Italy by Justinian had no permanence, for the Lombard was heir to the Goth on Italian soil. With the year 476 there does therefore take place a real transition in Italian history, for in that year the passing of Romulus Augustulus declared to the world that the attempt of the Empire directly to guide the destinies of the West had failed. The semblance of control which a Western emperor had previously maintained over the actions of the master of the soldiery was allowed to drop, and the fact stood naked and acknowledged that the commander of the Roman army held in his own hand the reins of government. He need no longer be at pains to secure a pliant puppet upon the throne of the Caesars.

The issue of the struggle is seen in the great contrast which characterises the history of the early Middle Ages in the West and in Eastern Europe. In the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire the threat of barbarian supremacy is averted, the Roman state emerges triumphant, and that state continues to support, alike in government and in army, in literature, art and religion, the traditions which it had inherited from the past. In the West the Empire is succeeded by barbarian kingdoms formed on Roman soil; there is a break with the culture of the ancient world, and man begins to form a new society.

# WHAT THE MODERN WORLD OWES TO ROME

An Assessment of our splendid Inheritance from the Roman Genius in many Departments of Life

By CYRIL BAILEY

Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. Author of *Religion of Ancient Rome* etc.: Editor of *The Legacy of Rome*

**T**O the average man to-day ancient Rome seems misty and far off. He has heard of the greatness of the Roman Empire, he knows that her literature is still the object of the study of scholars and a delight to those who understand it, and that excavation has revealed something of her architectural and constructional power not only in Italy but in other European countries. But it does not occur to him to connect Rome with his own life, nor with the civilization of the modern world around him. Yet in fact the influence of Rome is still felt in almost every department of modern life.

Latin words are enbedded in the language not only of France and Spain and Italy, but of England too; Roman law is the basis on which the law of the whole Western world, except England, is built; Roman literature has dictated the form of the literature of to-day; the great constructional works of Roman builders and engineers have laid down the lines on which the roads and railways, viaducts and bridges, churches and public buildings of to-day are made. It is the purpose of this chapter to endeavour to follow out this inheritance of ours in the main departments of life and to see what it is in fact that we owe to Rome. But first a distinction must be made between the various elements in this legacy.

In most countries of Europe there are to be found great roads, such as Watling Street in England, passing for the most part from south to north and throwing out branches east and west, aiming with a wonderful tenacity of direction at their remotest objective, making light of natural obstacles and refusing to swerve for hill or valley, mountain or marsh. Many of these

roads are in use to-day, traversed by car and lorry and motor-omnibus, and few of those who use them are aware that they are in fact passing along the great tentacles of the Roman Empire, all radiating from the capital to carry soldier and merchant to the farthest bounds of conquest. Now these roads are an allegory; for underneath our modern civilization, penetrating and sustaining it in every direction, lie the foundations laid by Rome in the four centuries of her greatness from 200 B.C. to A.D. 200: on these foundations have been built the kingdoms and republics, the manners and the customs of modern Europe, though to the modern world the foundations themselves are little known and their presence hardly recognized. This is our first debt to Rome, an unconscious influence, not always easy to trace, but pervading all our civilization and persisting in it through all changes.

Then there is a second heritage, more conscious and therefore more easy to determine, the heritage which has come to us **Conscious heritage due to learning** through learning, especially that of the Renaissance. Philologists distinguish in the English language three strata of Latin words. There are some, such as 'butter' and 'cheese,' which were brought over by the early envoys of Christianity in the days when Rome still lived, and are as deeply laid in the soil of English as are the great Roman roads in the countryside. A second stratum came through the medium of Norman French, and these words, too, mingling with the native Anglo-Saxon, have become welded in the common language of the people. But the third stratum, which philologists call words of learned



#### MODERN TRANSPORT ON A ROMAN ROAD

Roman roads are at once the greatest material legacy that Rome has left us, almost the only one still in uninterrupted use, and a symbol of her vast legacy in immaterial things—for their foundations lie staunch but unperceived below the modern surface. Above, a Roman road (Ermine Street) near Cirencester

*Photo Moss, Cirencester*

formation, were a deliberate introduction into the language made at various times, but particularly since the great wealth of Roman literature was 'reborn' to the modern world at the Renaissance. These words are not merely a symbol but an actual part of a great gift from Rome, which was deliberately sought and taken by Italy and through her by the other European nations—a gift not so much of practical modes of living and administration as of literature and science and art.

There is yet a third debt. The great Roman roads were carriers, spreading the knowledge and the ways of Rome over the vast tracts which her arms had subdued. And Rome herself was a carrier: what she learnt from other peoples, from the East, from Egypt and above all from Greece, she has transmitted to us. Her own literature was modelled on that of Greece and even if all direct knowledge of Greek had perished, we should yet know through Rome much of what it was. Again, it was along the high roads of Rome that the knowledge of Christianity itself spread through Europe. Rome the persecutor became also the messenger. The indirect debt to Rome is perhaps as great as the direct.

This chapter must, however, in the main confine itself to the first two heritages, nor can any attempt be made to trace in detail the means by which the heritage

passed to us, fascinating though such a study is. It is rather my aim to try to distinguish the essentially Roman elements which still have their place in the life of modern Europe, whether by continuous survival or by conscious rehabilitation. This is no easy task, for there is a natural temptation to exaggerate the debt and sometimes to interpret what is really a parallel as an inheritance. In a volume called *The Legacy of Rome* an attempt was made to estimate this inheritance, and I must acknowledge my debt for much of the material of this chapter to my fellow contributors thereto.

The safest start may perhaps be made with concrete things, and it may be asserted with confidence that the only actual objects made by the Romans and still in use to-day are in fact the roads. Reconstructed, no doubt, and repaired many a time, they yet retain their original courses, and excavation

has not infrequently revealed the Roman foundations beneath. Sound

**Roads the only concrete survivors**

and solid in structure, consisting often of four layers, two of small stones with cement, one of concrete, and on top a paving of large blocks of basalt (see page 2035), they have shown what roads which are to last should be, and though few roads since Roman times have been made with equal thoroughness of substructure, there are signs that modern traffic will even now necessitate a return to ancient methods.

Closely connected with the roads and hardly less valuable as a contribution to the art of construction is the arched bridge, by means of which Rome learnt to span the great rivers as they came in the path of the roads and so to avoid the necessity either of traffic by boat or of deviation to a fordable spot. The Roman architects preferred for strength many close-set arches to wider spans involving great lateral pressure, but an examination of any of the great Roman bridges which still survive, such as that at Rimini

(page 2037) or at Merida in Spain, will show that till the coming of suspension and cantilever bridges the type remained permanent throughout Europe and is still in use in all but the largest bridge structures.

The same principles of construction were used by the Romans in the making of the gigantic aqueducts by which they brought water, often from immense distances, to their cities. Remains of some of these are still with us to testify to the constructive powers of their makers, but the pipe-line has long superseded the aqueduct as a practical method of water supply.

The construction of these bridges and aqueducts was made possible by the use of the arch, and though it can not be said that Rome invented the arch—for it had been to some extent employed both by the Assyrians and the Egyptians and more by the Etruscans, from whom the Romans learnt it—its use was very greatly developed by them and passed from them to the modern world. Since Rome employed both the full and the segmental arch, and also, in the late Empire, the arch supported on columns, it may fairly be claimed that she suggested the types used in later architecture, whether Byzantine, Norman or Gothic. The development of the arch led to the still more



#### TRANSMITTED BY ROME : THE USE OF THE VAULT

The arch, the vault and the dome, if not strictly Roman inventions, are Roman in their application and development. And it was the survival of such structures as Hadrian's villa at Tivoli, with their vast vault-covered spaces, that gave the impetus to Renaissance architects. These are the remains of his Baths

*Photo, Alinari*

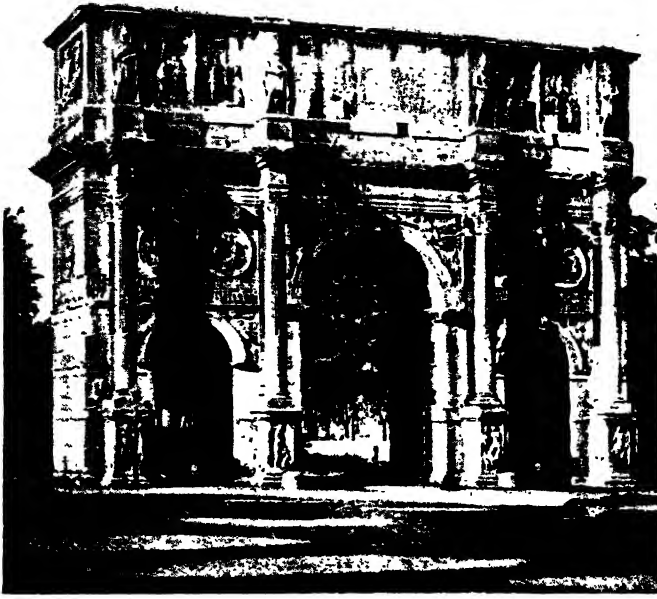
characteristically Roman invention of the vault, and here again, since Roman architects used alike the simple barrel vault, the cross vault made by the intersecting of barrel vaults, and the dome built over a circular space, it is clear that they discovered the prototypes of most subsequent methods of vaulting. It was the arch and the



#### MODERN-LOOKING ROMAN BRIDGE THAT STILL STANDS FIRM

Until other methods were made possible in modern times by the use of steel girders and the cantilever and suspension principles, the standard type of bridge was—and still is in the case of smaller bridges—that fixed by Roman architects. This bridge at Merida in Spain, the ancient Augusta Emerita (founded 25 B.C.), looks modern enough, except for the rather small span of its arches, but was erected in the days either of Augustus or of Trajan.

*Photo, Laurent*



A FRUITFUL SOURCE OF IMITATION

Some of our heritage from Rome is by way of direct and unconscious transmission some is deliberate copying started by artists and scholars of the Renaissance. Of the latter are the triumphal arches to be seen in every modern capital, inspired by such structures as the Arch of Constantine above.

vault too that made possible the type of building which is most essentially Roman, the great public structures, palaces, baths, amphitheatres, triumphal arches, many of which still stand in Italy and elsewhere. These were the models on which the great architects of the Renaissance worked, and their influence is still vital. It was undoubtedly Roman architects who solved the problem of covering great spaces, and so raising structures of vast and magnificent proportions (see also Chap. 72).

Of the normal materials of construction both stone and brick were, of course, used in the ancient world elsewhere than in Rome, but in Italy at any rate the Roman tradition of their use has continued, and to Rome is due the idea of a concrete core made of rubble and cement. To the Romans may also be ascribed the development of systematic drainage, especially for agricultural purposes: the Cloaca Maxima, intended at first to drain moisture from the wet ground of the Forum into the Tiber, became the forerunner of town drainage, and the overflow channels of the Alban lake, made at the time of the

taking of Veii, and of the Lago Fucino in the age of Claudius, remain as monuments of undertakings unequalled till quite modern days.

The tradition of domestic architecture also owes much to Rome. Blocks of town-houses at Ostia and in Rome itself show the system of arcades on the ground floor surmounted by several storeys of dwelling-rooms above, which may be seen in any Italian town to-day, and their presence in England at Chester may be a relic of Roman tradition, though normally the plan is unsuited for northern climates, as dwelling-rooms or shops behind the arcades are made too dark. The more elaborate form of dwelling-house, with its open court, may be seen in the great Italian palaces and, through the medium of the medieval monastery, has been handed

on to the collegiate buildings even of northern countries.

The hypocaust system of warming found in the Roman villas of northern lands cannot be claimed as the original of modern steam-heating, except in so far as its discovery by excavation may have suggested the adoption of a similar system. A study of domestic utensils, jugs, pots and pans, in the Latin countries would probably show that many types have persisted, though it would also be found that characteristic Roman shapes, such as that of the amphora, have disappeared.

Passing from architecture, which has been fully dealt with in Chapters 68 and 72, to sculpture, two great Roman traditions, rediscovered at the Renaissance, have undoubtedly influenced subsequent art very largely. The first is the use of relief, especially for the purpose of narrative, much employed by the Romans, particularly on public monuments, like the column of Trajan, on triumphal arches and on sarcophagi. The Romans did not invent relief sculpture, but with their usual practical bent they turned it from

its Greek mythological subjects to contemporary events. The sculptors of the Renaissance diverted it again to the service of the Church. In the Baptistery at Pisa stands the famous pulpit of Niccola Pisano, and hard by it may still be seen some of the ancient monuments which gave him his ideas.

Nor did these reliefs influence only modern sculpture, but painting too, more strongly in work like that of Mantegna, but generally in grouping and pose and in a sense of solid dignity. Much of the motive, too, of sculptural relief decoration is due to Rome, especially the realistic figures of



**CHESTER ROWS DERIVED FROM ROMAN BUILDERS ?**

The architectural debt is not restricted to Italy. So unsuitable to the sunless clime of England as the 'Rows' in the old Roman town of Chester that one can only believe them to be a direct legacy from invaders used to such arcaded shop-fronts as are shown in the reconstruction in page 2019.

*Photo, Will F. Taylor*



**ORIGIN OF ITALIAN DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE**

A glance at the photograph above, of the Street of the 'Casa di Diana' at Ostia, helped by a reference to the reconstructions in Chapter 71, will show what an obvious and direct debt modern domestic architecture owes to Rome, more especially in Italy itself. It might be a Naples street in ruins.

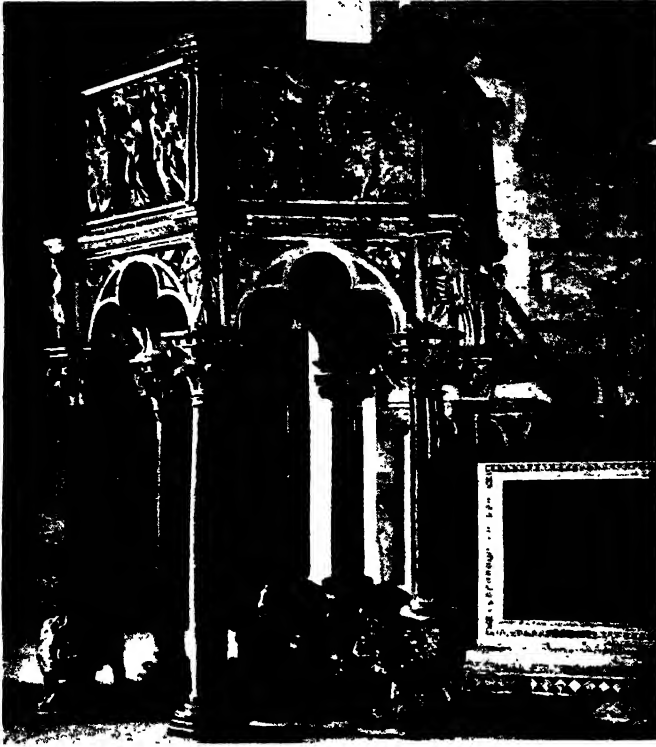
*Photo, Anderson*

animals, the groups of standing flowers wreathed round pillars, and the garlands of fruit which, in many forms, are almost commonplace to-day.

The second characteristic development of Roman sculpture was the portrait statue or bust; here again the origin was Greek, but the rare and idealised portrait of Greek art becomes the frequent and realistic portrait of Roman imperial times: the 'shoulder bust,' so often since employed, was indeed an invention of Rome. How strong was the Roman tradition in portrait sculpture may be seen by anyone who enters Westminster Abbey, and notes that until very recent times it was considered right that the statues of statesmen and other worthies should be done 'in the toga.'

Not less typically Roman is the equestrian statue; the Garibaldis and Emmanuels which are to be seen in every Italian town of respectable size to-day are the direct successors of the Colleoni and





Gattamelata statues at Venice and Padua, as these are in their turn of the Marcus Aurelius of the Capitol, the only ancient equestrian statue which has survived intact. Rome has undoubtedly left her mark on the art and architecture of modern Europe, but the legacy is for the most part, except for structural principles, not that of unconscious tradition, but the deliberate rediscovery of the Renaissance.

Before leaving the more concrete side of our inheritance from Rome, something must be said of her achievements in applied science. Rome had indeed a genius for turning the theoretic knowledge of Greece to the practical service of humanity, and much that she devised has been of lasting benefit. Her most notable successes lay in the sphere of medicine

and hygiene. The drainage of Rome has already been mentioned, and in the construction of new cities the establishment of a sanitation system became an essential element in town-planning. The doctor, too, usually a Greek, came to have a recognized position in the city, and in the army a physician was attached to each legion and certain of the more important cohorts, and to every ship in the imperial navy. A relief on Trajan's column gives us a picture of a field dressing-station in which the legionary physician is seen at work.

But the most valuable item of Rome's work of medical organization was undoubtedly the invention of the hospital. It appears first in the temple of Aesculapius on the Tiber Island a natural reproduction



#### RENAISSANCE DEBT TO ROMAN NARRATIVE RELIEF

The legacy from such monumental works as the Arch of Constantine is not only architectural. The reliefs with which they are covered influenced both the sculptors and painters of the Renaissance; as witness, top, the pulpit in the Baptistery at Pisa by Niccolò Pisano (1260) and, bottom, the sculpturesque *Triumph of Caesar* by Mantegna (1490).

*Photo, Hausfänger*

of Greek practice. But later it is developed and organized in connexion with the army, and more than one hospital site has been excavated and its wards and corridors and refectory recognized. In civil life we hear as early as the first century A.D. of 'valetudinaria,' often apparently 'nursing-homes,' in connexion with the doctor's residence. Private benevolence and municipal enterprise seem to have provided similar institutes in provincial towns, and as Christianity naturally took over the idea of the hospital, its history can be traced continuously down to modern times.

Another important department of practical scientific work developed by the Romans was that of surveying and mensuration. The main instrument in use was the 'groma' (measuring rod), constructed with lineals at right angles and dependent plummets, and writings of the 'gromatici' (surveyors) still survive; we hear also in Vitruvius of an elaborate kind of hodometer which was used for determining distances on the other side of a river. The system of Roman milestones is familiar to everyone, and they led to the preparation of 'itineraria' for military purposes, which are our earliest surviving maps. Among other scientific inventions of which we have remains or descriptions may be mentioned the sun-dial and an elaborate form of water-clock. In all these ways Rome left a legacy which later ages have gradually developed.

If we turn now to the less tangible forms of inheritance, undoubtedly the most striking is that of language. All the great Romance languages of Europe, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and French, have grown directly out of the Latin which was learnt by the inhabitants of those countries from the invading armies of Rome and from the settlers and merchants who followed in their train. It is



#### ROMAN MODELS FOR DECORATIVE RELIEF

The delightfully naturalistic rendering of wreaths and floral ornament imitated in so many modern buildings was developed in the Augustan Age, to which belongs the fragment of the Ara Pacis (right). The rose pillar (left) with its bees and birds is from the tomb of the Haterii (end of last century B.C.).

*Museo delle Terme, photo, Anderson; and Lateran Museum, photo, Mosconi*

indeed an amazing testimony to the influence of Rome on conquered races that, apparently without any conscious imposition on the part of the Romans, the subjects naturally adopted the language which they heard their conquerors speak, assimilating it, no doubt, to their own habits of pronunciation, but with the exception of a few words entirely forgetting their own tongues.

Only in the more distant and outlying provinces of the Empire, in what are now Germany and Holland, and in Britain, where the hold of Rome was never so strong, did the natives resist this Latinising tendency and retain their own dialects, and even they were not uninfluenced. If we remember too that these Romance languages have been carried into the South American states and other parts of the world by colonisation, it is not too much to say, as a recent authority has put it, that at the present day what was once the local dialect of the petty district of Latium is spoken as their mother tongue by half the nations of the civilized world.

The Romance languages are indeed the most direct, and continuous portion of the heritage of the modern world from Rome; they have persisted and developed without a break from the time when the Roman Empire first spread over Europe. But it is not to be supposed that the Latin from which they are derived is the classical and literary Latin of Cicero and Vergil. It is rather a colloquial and common language spoken by the peasant and the plebeian and above all by the soldier. We can trace the foundations of it in Latin literature: there are very old elements which occur in the colloquial speech of the comedians, Plautus and Terence, and then dropped out of the more refined language of poets and prose-writers, but no doubt survived beneath the surface in popular speech to re-emerge again

in the languages of the provinces. Or, again, late in Roman literature we find a new and more debased vulgarity of speech in the sketch of provincial life given us by Petronius in his *Banquet of Trimalchio*, and there we can see the beginnings of the disregard of strict accidence and syntax which was to make for the greater simplicity of Italian and French as compared with classical Latin.

But these traces are comparatively slight, and it has been left to the researches of modern scholars, working backwards from the early forms of the Romance languages to their common basis, to reconstruct the 'vulgar Latin' from which they were derived, and if we are to picture the process of development, we must think of the Roman army, itself a conglomerate of natives of many parts of the Empire,



#### REVERENCE FOR THE TOGA

So great is the Roman civic tradition in portrait statuary that until recently it was the custom to portray statesmen garbed in a representation (not over-accurate) of the toga. This is the statue of Sir Robert Peel in Westminster Abbey

*Photo, H. N. King*

using this 'vulgar Latin' as its common means of communication, and conveying it to the various subject tribes, who each acquired it with such modifications as came natural to them. Possibly the best representatives of these early 'local Latin' dialects would be the comparatively undeveloped, because still wholly unliterary, dialects of Romansch and Ladin, spoken by the peasants of the Engadine and parts of the Tirol. The wonder is that with all their subsequent development the great Romance languages have retained so much affinity with one another and with the Latin which gave them birth.

But the Romance languages are not the only gift of Latin to the speech of modern Europe, and it is possible to trace two later stages of communication which affected not only them

but other European tongues as well. In the first place Christianity developed a Latin of its own, distinct on the one hand from 'vulgar Latin,' yet on the other showing a greater elasticity than the classical Latin and using largely its own vocabulary. Not only were books written in it, but it was a living language spoken alike in the monasteries and by the clergy. The missionaries who went out from Rome carried it with them and not merely enriched the Romance languages with a new fount of Roman inspiration, but introduced a Latin element into English, German and Dutch.

To this vein of Latin influence are due, for instance, the use of 'pensare,' 'to weigh,' as the normal word for 'to think' in French, Spanish and Italian, and, as has been already noticed, the common

words in English and German for such articles as 'butter' and 'cheese,' which the Roman emissaries introduced with them. Here we have a stratum that lies midway between the continuous growth and the introductions due to learning, though it is on the whole more akin to the latter.

Lastly there are the deliberate adoptions of words from literary Latin. In the Romance countries such introductions were made early, but in England, which already in Saxon times had its vernacular literature, they did not begin till later, and then at first through the medium of learned adoptions in French. The great revival of classical learning at the Renaissance opened the way to a whole host of learned formations, some of them absurd conceits and 'euphuisms,' such as

Shakespeare ridicules in *Love's Labour's Lost*; others valuable words expressing new ideas or putting succinctly what the vernacular required a periphrasis to say; these have become part of the normal speech, though most of them still have something of a literary flavour.

Germany very largely resisted the invasion of learned Latin, and some words which had found a root were banished by a later purism. In England, too, there has been from time to time an outcry against Latinisms and a clamour to return to 'pure Anglo-Saxon'; but the process has gone too far, and the learned Latin element is as truly a part of modern English as is the Norman-French—also derived from Latin—and the Anglo-Saxon.

Language leads naturally to literature, and here the debt of the modern world to



**A SPLENDID EQUESTRIAN STATUE THAT OWES ITS INSPIRATION TO ROME**

The only Roman equestrian statue that survives to us is that of Marcus Aurelius in Rome (see page 1974), though there must have been many others; that of Domitian, for instance, in the Forum. It undoubtedly inspired such Renaissance works as the Bartolomeo Colleoni by Verrocchio (1435-88) in Venice, said to be the finest equestrian statue in the world; and these again are the lineal ancestors of all those similar works, of very varying merit, that adorn our modern capitals.



#### ORGANIZED ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE

Medicine may be a Greek gift to the world, but its intelligent organization is Roman. State doctors, exempt from taxation, were assigned to all the towns of the Empire, and the legions and cohorts of the army had their medical staff. Above, an advanced dressing station shown on Trajan's Column.

From Cichorius, 'Die Trajanssäule'

Rome is hardly more easy to define or specify. On the one hand, the modern nations owe to Rome the forms of poetry and prose in their many departments, and much of modern literature is very definitely based on Roman models; on the other, in a wider sense the whole structure of modern speech on its more formal side, written and spoken alike, is in its essence Latin. Here no more can be attempted than to illustrate these claims in certain spheres, and if illustrations are taken chiefly from English literature, this is to a great extent because English literature, for all its independence in language, stands in an almost closer relation to the spirit and form of the literature of Rome even than that of the Romance languages.

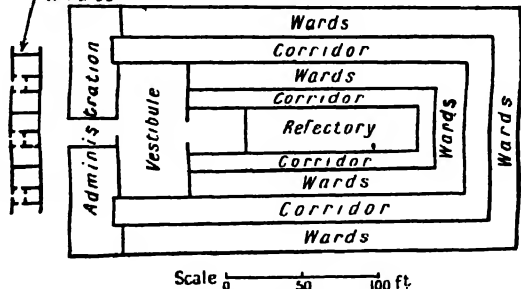
The main forms of poetry, epic, didactic, lyric, elegiac, dramatic, were handed on to Rome by Greece, their inventor, and with them came the forms of verse which Greece had found appropriate to each. Roman poets, desirous in all things to rival their models, forced a language which had a stress accent into scansion by quantity, and so preserved the Greek metres, giving them at the same time a strength and dignity which were characteristically Roman. These forms of

poetry have passed unchanged and unchallenged into the literature of modern Europe, and even the metres have been largely followed, though with such necessary alterations as were required by the genius of the language.

Thus France, while preserving the iambic as the distinctive metre of tragedy, has given it its own formalism by the use of couplets with alternating masculine and feminine rhymes; and English poets, feeling that the quantitative hexameter was ill-suited to a language where stress was emphatic and quantity hardly perceived, have yet preserved the force and dignity of the epic form in blank verse, or the heroic couplet. Lyric poetry, too, has

freed itself from the constraint of the very precise Latin forms, yet has retained in a different shape its essential lightness and elasticity. The great change in modern poetry is undoubtedly the introduction of the element of rhyme, which was already showing itself slyly in the 'leonine' pentameters and became explicit in the accentual hymns of the Christian church. Yet even this totally new element has tended to perpetuate the spirit of Latin poetry, in that it has added the touch of formalism to verse which might otherwise have become excessively free.

Detail of construction of wards



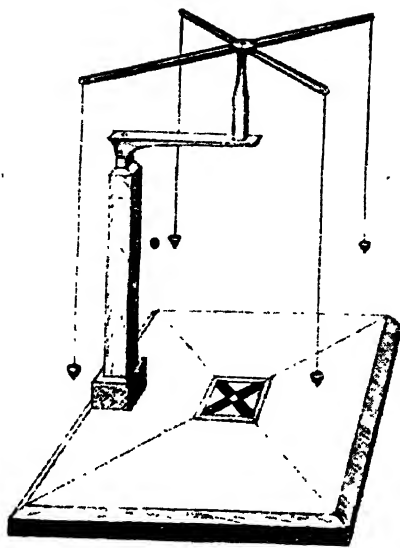
PLAN OF A MILITARY HOSPITAL

Great attention was paid by the Romans to public and military hospitals. This is the ground plan of a military institution traced at Novaesium near Düsseldorf (c. A.D. 100), with the probable uses of its various parts indicated.

From 'The Legacy of Rome,' Clarendon Press

These are perhaps over-technical details, but they serve to show the tightness of the grip of Latin models on the poetry of the modern world. Let us attempt to enter upon wider ground. If one were asked to name the Latin poets who have had the most influence on European poetry, there could be little doubt that the answer would be Vergil, Horace and Ovid. They are the 'Roman roads' of Latin literature, for they were known and studied continuously throughout the Middle Ages. The Greek poets had to be rediscovered at the Renaissance, but the great poets of Rome never fell into oblivion. Vergil had a unique position; from his constant use as a schoolbook he came to be regarded, oddly enough, as the prime exemplar of good grammar and so had an influence not only on the structure of mediæval Latin, but probably also on that of the Romance languages themselves; what was more important, from his own deep religious feeling and in particular from the universal recognition of the Fourth Eclogue as a Messianic prophecy, he came to be looked on as the forerunner of Christianity in the ancient world.

So when classical poetry woke again and the first great Christian epic of the modern world was written, Dante turned naturally to Vergil not merely as his model, but as the companion who should unlock for him the secrets of the other world. And in English poetry Milton, steeped in the classical poets, Greek and Latin alike, yet has Vergil more than any other before his eyes all through *Paradise Lost*; and, nearer to our own day, *The Idylls of the King*, to take but one instance, treating of a theme remote from all classical associations, still bears manifest testimony



USED BY THE ROMAN SURVEYOR

Surveying and mensuration were Roman arts. A specimen of the 'groma,' or surveying instrument, was found at Pompeii—four arms at right angles, bearing plummets. The plummets gave the horizontal and the arms were for laying out rectangular sites

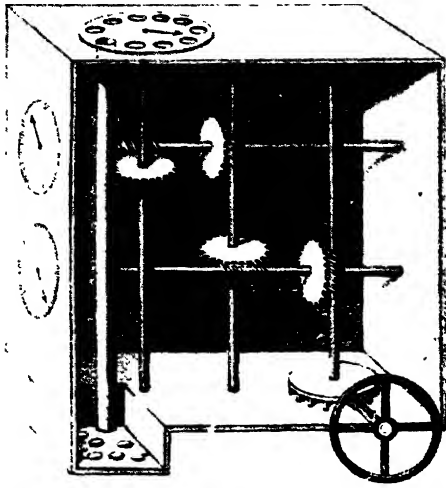
*Courtesy of Dr. Chas. Singer*

to its author's profound devotion to the 'wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of men.' Indeed it would not be too much to say that no modern epic has been written which is not to a greater or less degree under the spell of Vergil, and that he has profoundly influenced the thought and diction of modern poetry in all its forms.

The influence of Horace has been less definite but possibly more pervading. His Odes few have dared to imitate—for they are inimitable—but it is impossible to read English love lyrics, from the Elizabethans and Herrick down to Robert Bridges, without being conscious that Horace

has moulded their shape, while his Satires and Epistles contributed almost as much as Juvenal to form the style of the satirists of the age of Anne. More than this, Horace has had a deep influence on modern life. Learnt at school by every educated man, cherished and quoted in later life, he was a large element, with his shrewd common sense and his often delicate feeling, in shaping the characters and outlook of the gentleman of to-day. This intimacy is now passing away, but one cannot think of Pitt and Fox and Burke and Gladstone without tasting their Horatian flavour, and realizing how deeply it penetrated the society of their times.

Ovid was the great story-teller of Rome, and it was through him that the legends of classical mythology came down to the modern world to be told and retold in our literature from Chaucer to William Morris. He, too, is the prototype of the writer of 'occasional verse' and, as he demonstrated to his contemporaries the extraordinary flexibility of the Latin elegiac, so he laid the lines for a whole variety of poetic essays from the antiquarianism of



#### ANTICIPATION OF THE 'TAXIMETER'

To measure distances, such as the base-line for calculating the width of rivers, there was the instrument here drawn from the description of Vitruvius. A wheel of known diameter drove worm-gears operating a perforated disk that dropped a pebble into a box at stated intervals.

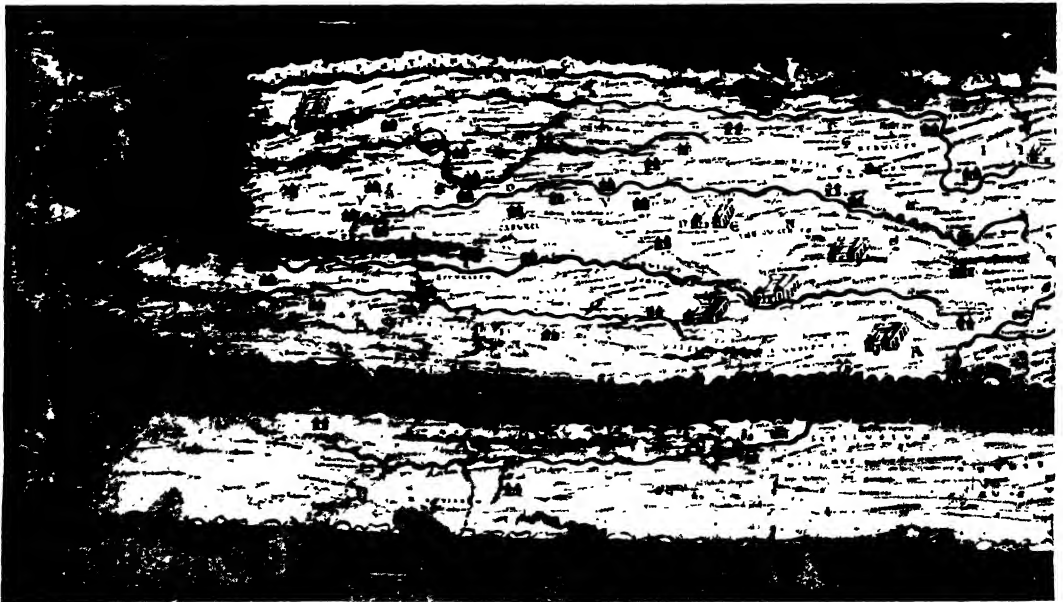
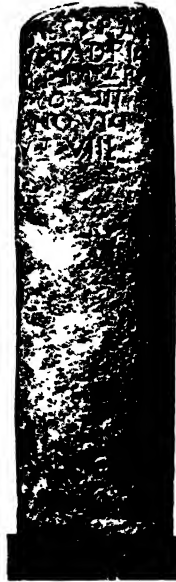
*Courtesy of Dr. Chas. Singer*

the Fasti, through the psychological narrative of the Heroides to the personal outbursts of the Tristia and the Letters from

Pontus. He suggested to the modern world new themes for verse and the manner in which they might be treated.

Besides these three great names there were others who set the model for much modern work, not so much as permanent influences through the ages, but

through a revival of interest at the Renaissance. The tragedies of Seneca are not among the best works of Latin poetry: they are rhetorical exercises mainly on Greek themes. But they suited the genius of the Renaissance, and have greatly affected the development of tragedy in Italy and France. In England they were welcomed as models by the Elizabethans: Ben Jonson was soaked in them, Marlowe shows their influence, and even Shakespeare was not untouched by them; Titus Andronicus is 'pure Seneca from beginning to end.'



#### THE PEUTINGER TABLE: ROME'S CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICAL ROAD MAPPING

Above is the kind of result produced with the instrument at the top of the page. It is the Gallic portion of the Peutinger Table, a thirteenth-century copy ultimately derived from a third-century original—an itinerary rather than a map. Compare it with a Greek map such as Ptolemy's (page 2076), in which the correct land-shapes are deduced from the principles of abstract science; here geography is of no account, and road distances are the practical aim. Top, a Roman milestone.

*From Peutingeriana Tabula Itineraria Vindobonae*



And through these Elizabethans Seneca affected the whole course of tragedy.

Not less remarkable was the lead given to comedy by Plautus and Terence, more perhaps in France—Molière will occur to everyone—than in England; though the Restoration drama, and especially Congreve, owes much to them. Here Terence was in the main the model for style, while Plautus suggested the many types which comedy has assumed, the burlesque, the farce, the comedies of plot and manners.

**Rome the vehicle for Greek comedy** We have here an interesting instance of Rome as the carrier: we know that Plautus and Terence modelled themselves on the Greek poets of the New Comedy, very little of whose work has survived, and if it had not been for the Roman comedians we should have known almost nothing of their aims and manner. Nor must the one branch of literature which Rome invented for herself be omitted. The satire of Rome, Juvenal perhaps more than his predecessors Lucilius and Horace, gave us Pope and Dryden and Swift, and started in England a form of literature which she has made peculiarly her own.

Among Latin prose writers there is one figure who stands out above all others, as Vergil does among the poets, and his influence has been even wider. Cicero not merely fixed the form for Latin prose, but for the prose of the civilized world: 'European prose,' says Dr. Mackail, 'as an instrument of thought is Cicero's creation.' This is most immediately obvious in the domain in which he was supreme, that of oratory. Roman orators had for generations been feeling after a style, experimenting at first in their own rough Latin way, then giving themselves over to Greek theory and either trying to imitate the stern simplicity of the strict Atticists or the florid and epigrammatic manner which was known as Asianism. Cicero, combining the methods of all three recognized Greek styles, the simple, the grand and the moderate, and assigning to each its special place in the structure of the speech, invented a manner dignified, subtle and impassioned, from which any variation must henceforth be regarded as a departure from the orthodox.

Its influence on later Latin may be tested by a simple fact which recent researches have brought to light: the secret of the cadences at the close of Cicero's sentences has lately been discovered; the cursus of the Papal Bulls has long been known, and this proves to be nothing but Cicero's own cadence adapted to the popular scansion by accent instead of by quantity. Indeed all European oratory is Ciceronian: no reader of Bossuet or of Burke can fail to detect it, and even in these days, when the conscious influence of a classical education affects comparatively few, and oratory has become far more colloquial, the Ciceronian structure is still the inevitable vehicle of oratorical expression. Nor is it a mere matter of the arrangement of words: the whole method of setting out an argument, of the figures of speech, antithesis, parallelism, the rhetorical question, all come from Cicero.

It may fairly be claimed that Cicero's oratory has had a more lasting and more far-reaching influence in the formation of style than the writing of any other man who has ever lived. He is hardly less important as an essayist on ethical and political themes and as a letter writer. In both these provinces he has been a model to many generations writing in many different tongues.

In other departments of prose, Latin influence is not so constant or so obvious. But in the writing of history it would be true to say that modern historians have gone to Latin models rather than Greek: the garrulous flow of Herodotus and the crabbed brevity of Thucydides were ill-suited for an art which the modern world requires to be at once concentrated and straightforward. Of the Latin writers the terse epigrams of Tacitus have found an occasional follower like Gibbon, but it is Livy, with his vigorous and effective narrative and his continuous sense of the dignity of his theme, who has most often been the model—yet even here the form of expression in the modern writing of history is really Ciceronian.

Roman philosophy was but a pale replica of the thought of Greece, yet it too has left its stamp. The practical mind



of Rome turned away from the abstract metaphysical speculation, which was the foundation of Greek philosophy and gives it its unique value for the modern world, and concentrated rather on the problem of the conduct of man as an individual and a citizen, in other words on ethics and politics. For this reason it was the creeds of the Epicurean and Stoic which found more followers at Rome than the speculations of Plato and Aristotle.

Rome in consequence evolved and bequeathed to the modern world a practical theory of life and a type of character, combining the natural gravity and sobriety of the Roman with the restraint and resignation of the Stoic, which has gone far to shape modern ideals. The expression of this attitude is to be found in the moral discussions of Cicero, but a deeper influence on modern thinkers and writers has probably been exercised by the eclectic and discursive disquisitions of Seneca, which, like his tragedies, caught the sympathy of the Renaissance and have only lately fallen into neglect.

In Rome, too, philosophy became closely allied to theology, and their joint working towards a monotheism, which regarded all the gods of polytheism as different manifestations of one divine power, undoubtedly aided the reception of Christianity and supplied it with some of its most characteristic and lasting words and conceptions, such as 'religion,' 'piety,' 'sacrament,' 'saint' (see also Chap. 74). The services of Rome in applied science have already been noticed: on the theoretical side her work was almost entirely that of transmission and compilation, yet in medicine the writings of Celsus were long treated with veneration after his rediscovery at the Renaissance, and it is unlikely that the Greek atomic

theory of the world would have received much recognition in modern thought if it had not been for its exposition in the majestic verse of Lucretius.



A ROMAN MATRON

Not the least of our debt to Rome is the ideal of frugal virtue that informed Roman family life at its best and was incarnate in the Roman matron

*Berlin Museum*

I have tried in dealing with Latin literature, as in other departments, to see what elements have been of lasting effect and how they have influenced modern thought and writing. But it must not be forgotten that our greatest debt to these Roman writers is in fact their own existence. They are a treasure-house of thought and of beauty of expression to which generation after generation in the civilized countries of the world has returned for inspiration. If their works had indeed exercised the influence which has been traced on modern literature and then suddenly been lost, from that moment not

only scholars but all true lovers of literature would have been infinitely the poorer.

Literature is after all both in the ancient and modern worlds the privilege of the few, and to understand the great work of Rome in the spread of civilization it is necessary rather to look at the life of the normal citizen and to see what lasting effects it has had. In the sphere of social life there can be no doubt that Rome's greatest gift to the world is the Roman conception of the family. The idea of the 'familia,' the descendants of the oldest living ancestor, with their wives and children and their slaves and retainers, living together under the rule of the 'paterfamilias,' was the very root at Rome of social life and of law. It was an idea unknown in Greece, and it has been handed on to modern nations as one of their most valuable possessions: in modern Italy and France it is perhaps more developed on its legal side, in England

**Roman influence  
in Social Life**

it is seen in the conception of 'home,' an idea which the Roman, who included his household gods in the familia, expressed in the famous phrase, Lares et Penates.

One of the principal foundations on which this conception of the family rested was the position of women at Rome. Though in theory the wife and the unmarried daughters were always in the legal power of the paterfamilias—in his 'hand' as the Roman said—yet in practice the matron of the household, never secluded and suppressed as among the Greeks, had a wide authority in domestic affairs and a profound influence on the early upbringing of her children; the 'mother of the Gracchi' was not an exception but a type. From her at first, and later from the father, the Roman boy of the Republic had his education, a training not in what we should call 'knowledge' but in the way to live. Manliness ('virtus') he learnt in his sports and games, domestic affection ('pietas') from the love of his parents and the obedience which they demanded, and seriousness ('gravitas') from their behaviour and from the discussions of his father's friends and guests,

at which he was privileged, as he grew older, to be present. That there was sometimes harshness in the exercise of his rights by the paterfamilias, that divorce was not infrequent even under the Republic, and for causes sometimes in our eyes inadequate, is true; but the ideal of the Roman family was a fine conception of which the world has not yet lost sight.

No doubt this is a picture of the Roman home under the Republic—and not even in the late Republic—and, later, things changed. For instance, under Greek influence the system of education was largely modified: the Roman boy, either under a Greek teacher at home or at a school with others, was given an education in reading and writing which led to the study of literature, Greek and Latin. And later still there grew up the schools of rhetoric, which had on the whole a deteriorating effect. But this Graeco-Roman education gave rise to the courses known as the 'trivium' and 'quadrivium' which dominated the Middle Ages, and

was the origin of a system, based on the Classics, both in the schools and in the universities, which the modern world—for better or worse—has only recently abandoned.

Nor did the position of women remain unchanged: as oriental customs and oriental vice crept in to the Roman world, the type of the old Roman matron gave way to something far less desirable, and it was as a reaction from this that early Christianity placed women in a position of subordination. The old simplicity of home life, too, gave way before the luxury and vulgarity produced by the vast riches of the Empire and the decay of civil life and sense of duty. Nor can it be denied that here Rome left an inheritance, which the modern world has not been slow to copy when occasion arose.

The scholars of the Renaissance recovered not only the treasures of ancient literature, but not a little of the decadence of the life of Imperial Rome, and modern Europe can point to many periods and places in which this worse tradition has held sway.

It might then well be asked whether the tradition of the true Roman conception of the family and the home has indeed persisted into modern days: has not the modern world rediscovered the idea for itself? The answer would probably be that there has been real continuity, and that three influences have tended to preserve it. First, the law, based always on the old conception and passing into the legal system of modern states; secondly, the life in the country towns and villages of Italy, where the old ideal still subsisted; and thirdly, the strange fact that, as the capital itself became more corrupt, there sprang up in the towns of the Empire a vigorous life on the old Roman lines. The transmission here was, therefore, not unlike that of the Romance languages.

It will be noticed that nothing has as yet been said of that which the mere name of Rome brings first before the mind, the great system of administration and organization which first made her a self-contained state and then gave her dominion over an immense empire. It is this conception of Rome which has fired the

The other side  
of the picture

modern mind more than all others, and is naturally considered as her main legacy. It is not, therefore, unreasonable that it should be treated as the culmination of an attempt to estimate our debt to Rome. But it must be discussed with caution; for in many respects it is not possible to trace direct inheritance, and the influence of an idea is never easy to determine.

Rome is first, both historically and logically, a singularly efficient and complex city state. The city states of Greece were smaller and simpler in their conception, and, except for the one brief period of Athenian supremacy, no one of them approached the position held by Rome in Italy. The internal efficiency of Rome as

**Roman genius for administration** a city state depended primarily on the sanity and effectiveness of her law and her legal administration, based on the will of the citizens, and developed and codified through the centuries as new needs arose. I have no competence to speak on the subject of Roman law, and it has been amply dealt with in an earlier chapter (Chap. 78), which cannot be read without an immediate recognition of how much of this law has descended to modern Europe, not merely of the main structure, but of the detail of principle and enactment. Here it may be pointed out that the great distinction between criminal and civil law, between statute and case law, comes from Rome, and, above all, the recognition that the ultimate sanction of law must be the will of a people who obey it. 'Rome,' said Lord Oxford, 'founded, developed, and systematised the jurisdiction of the world.' The claim is strongly put, but it can be substantiated to the hilt, and if it were Rome's only legacy, it might yet be said to be the framework of modern civilization.

For the administration of this city state Rome developed her own peculiar constitution. In his political dialogue *De Republica* (On The Commonwealth) Cicero pointed out that this constitution combined the advantages of the three traditional types, the element of monarchy being represented by the annually elected magistrates, that of aristocracy by the Senate, and that of democracy by

the popular assemblies, and he finds its perfect working in the second century B.C., when the three elements were best balanced and harmonised: later in the Republic either the Senate or individuals who had obtained a position approximating to tyranny tended to predominate, and the Empire was, of course, the acknowledgement of a military monarchy. The parallel between Cicero's ideal and the English constitution has often been noticed, and though it cannot claim to be more than a parallel, there is no doubt that it has often influenced the ideas of British statesmen, and in more modern and consciously created constitutions Rome has largely been taken as a model.

This city state of Rome, effective, pugnacious and ambitious, gradually came to dominate her immediate neighbours, Latin, Etruscan, Samnite, Oscan and Umbrian, then to extend her sway over the whole of Italy, and finally by a succession of wars against the powers and tribes with whom she came in contact—Carthage, Greece, Spain, Gaul, Germany, Egypt, Asia, Armenia, Bithynia, Syria—she became mistress of a vast empire which in effect comprised the whole known world. The instrument by which this tremendous development

was brought about was **Spreading net of organization** the Roman army. At first an army of citizens, who were even for purely political purposes often assembled in the military divisions of the *centuriae*, it later embraced the conquered Italians, who were brought to feel Rome's interests their own by the gift of a modified franchise; reorganized and made professional about the end of the second century B.C., it contained in its ultimate constitution but a small Roman element beside the high officials, and was recruited largely from the conquered provincials, who would be moved to distant frontiers. On the Roman wall in Northumberland, for instance, we find the records of the legions of Spain and Gaul (it would not be difficult to find parallels to this during the Great War).

The organization of this vast force was an immense undertaking, and it would be a fascinating task to examine

it in detail, and to see how far, making allowance for the introduction of new armaments and methods of fighting, the arrangement of modern armies follows similar lines. It is at least safe to claim that Rome gave to the modern world the conception of a great professional army and the main fabric of its organization.

The system by which this great Empire was governed had grown up, like that of some modern empires, almost at haphazard, as is shown in Chapters 62, 63 and 65. But in the reign of Augustus, as we have also seen in Chapter 65, changes were introduced which made, on the whole, for a juster administration. Under the new system abuses in provincial administration were diminished, and a high authority has stated that 'whatever their limitations, the men of the Empire wrought for the betterment and the happiness of the world'. The brighter side of Rome's management of her Empire lies, indeed, in her general attitude to the life of the subject peoples, or, as she always preferred to call them, the 'allies.' As far as possible in settling the constitution of a province, she adopted any machinery of government which she found. Thus the Rupilian Law, which

**Treatment of subject peoples**

established the constitution of Sicily, left judicial arrangements in the towns much as they were, and always secured the presence of Sicilians on the jury of a case in which Sicilians were concerned; similarly, the arrangements for the payment of the corn tribute to Rome were based on those previously in force under Hiero, the king of Syracuse. Freedom in customs and commerce and private life was largely guaranteed, nor did Rome ever interfere with the religion of the provinces, except when she put down customs, such as human sacrifice, which she definitely held to be immoral, or, as in the case of the early Christians, met with refusal to acknowledge the divinity of the emperor.

Meanwhile, in a pacified province Roman merchants and other settlers would establish themselves, and appear to have succeeded in making friendly relations with the conquered peoples. By this means Roman civilization and culture

were diffused, and a vigorous and well-ordered life arose in many of the municipalities of the provinces: it is noticeable that under the Empire many of Rome's most distinguished men of letters, including Seneca himself, were provincials. By the exercise of tact and judgement in these matters Rome did much to accustom her subjects to her rule, and it soon became the chief desire of the provincials, as individuals and corporate bodies, to acquire Roman citizenship and so be linked still more closely with Rome. The citizenship was freely granted in Imperial times, and representatives of the provinces were even admitted to the Senate. Thus by a system of interpenetration the unwieldy body of the Empire was welded into one, and the widespread adoption of the Latin language, which has been noticed, was a tangible symbol of its unity.

**Diffusion of Roman Culture**

As one looks back with admiration and almost with amazement on this vast achievement of conquest and organization one asks what has been its effect on the life of the modern world. The answer must be twofold. On the one hand, it has been the means of handing on to civilized Europe all those gifts of literature, language, art, science and practical construction which it has been the endeavour of this chapter to trace; without the Empire these things must have been the possession of Rome alone and would have perished with her, only to be brought to light again by the researches of scholars and archaeologists.

By this legacy Rome has without doubt left Europe—severed as it is into many nations, often hostile to one another—with a genuine uniformity of civilization and a sense of the solidarity of its culture and modes of thought. But if on the other hand the question be raised with regard to the Roman conception of Empire itself, the answer is much more doubtful. It is certain that there has been no continuous tradition. The Empire of Rome itself split into the Western and Eastern halves: Constantinople partitioned the world with Rome. Christianity became the accepted creed of both Empires, and the Roman Church

developed the idea of a divine kingdom which should embrace the whole earth ; if the old Roman conception of a universal empire and the Roman imperial organization is to be found anywhere in the modern world, it is in the idea of the Catholic Church. For a time this idea was embodied in the Holy Roman Empire, but that, too, split into a dyarchy. Sacred and secular could not work together ; religion would not consent to be, as in the old Roman Republic, subordinate to the state, and the emperors, the practical rulers, chafed under the papal claim to supremacy. The final blow to the old conception of the civilized world as a unity was given by the growth of nationality : the one was split into many, the Empire became kingdoms claiming independence and autonomy, and as a result the universal church, too, was torn asunder ; the Reformation completed the work of secular division.

Then the development of exploration and the unexpected discovery of new continents once again opened the possibility of Empire. Spain, Portugal, Holland,

England began to acquire vast tracts of territory in distant lands, and slowly and painfully and with many mistakes they had to devise methods of governing them ; again and again they failed and the offshoots acquired complete independence. In all this process there has no doubt been a real parallelism to the experience of Rome in the ancient world, and statesmen have always delighted in proclaiming the parallel : we talk of our colonial governors as ' great proconsuls ' with the feeling that we are enhancing their dignity and the greatness of their work. But it is not more than a parallel. Not only has there been no continuity of tradition between the Roman and any modern empire, but circumstances are very different.

The colonies of modern states have often been won not by invading armies but by peaceful settlers, whose work and importance have gradually increased till the state took over command. Above all, modern empires are based essentially

on the principle of nationality ; they are regarded as the possessions or the extensions of individual states, which are autonomous and in a condition of rivalry. Nor in many cases has the fate of the original inhabitants received the attention of the colonising state : the aim has rather been to bind the new colonists to their mother-country. The modern world is perhaps even now, taught by the horrors of war, feeling its way to a federation of nations, wider and more universal than Rome could ever have conceived ; but it will not be an empire of nations, it will be a republic.

Yet for all these differences in circumstance, in method and in aim, Rome must always be the great object lesson in empire. We can learn

from her that the oppression of subject races and the assertion of possessive rights bring their own retribution ; that sympathy and consideration for their traditions and customs will lead in turn to a desire to enter fully into the membership of a great empire, and that the encouragement of such desires is the true cement which welds the whole together. We may learn, too, to acknowledge the duty of service to the state. For, whatever may have been Rome's shortcomings, she did achieve the noble ideal of an empire in which people of many races and many languages lived together under one harmonious rule, and so brought about the diffusion of the culture which she herself had hardly learnt and its preservation for the nations of the modern world.

' Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento '—' Thou, O Roman, take heed to rule the nations with thy sway '—was Vergil's summing up of the primary duty of the Roman state : it is owing to her success in carrying out this precept that Rome has handed down to the modern world treasures of art and architecture, language and literature, thought and action, and remains for us the greatest figure among the peoples of antiquity and the source and foundation of much that we count best in our own civilization.

**Roman Empire  
an object lesson**

# Fourth Era

## THE BYZANTINE AGE .

476—1073

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### Chronicle XIV—EAST AND WEST IN FERMENT, 476-632

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| <p>84. Monasticism : Its Causes and Effects <i>G. G. Coulton, D.Litt.</i></p> <p>85. Constantinople in the Time of Justinian <i>F. N. Pryce</i></p> <p>88. The War of the Creeds <i>Prof. Walter Alison Phillips</i></p> | <p>86. Renaissance of Persian Power <i>Brig.-Gen. Sir Percy Sykes, K.C.I.E., C.B.</i></p> <p>87. The Fathers of the Church <i>Prof. F. A. Wright</i></p> |
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### Chronicle XV—ISLAM'S GREAT CENTURY OF CONQUEST, 632-732

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| <p>89. Mahomet and His Teaching <i>Prof. D.S. Margoliouth, D.Litt.</i></p> <p>91. Hinduism and the Growth of Caste <i>Ernest B. Havell</i></p> | <p>90. A Study of Japanese Origins <i>L. H. Dudley Buxton</i></p> |
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### Chronicle XVI—EMERGING OF THE NATIONS, 732-867

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| <p>92. Medieval Life in the Western Kingdoms <i>Prof. A. Hamilton Thompson, D.Litt.</i></p> <p>95. The Papacy and Temporal Power <i>H.B. Workman, D.Litt., D.D.</i></p> | <p>93. The Life of Saxon England <i>Prof. R. W. Chambers, D.Lit.</i></p> <p>94. Spread of the Slavonic Folk <i>N. B. Jopson</i></p> |
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### Chronicle XVII—THE NATIONS IN BEING, 867-1073

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| <p>96. The Vikings and their Voyages <i>A. MacCallum Scott</i></p> <p>97. The Golden Days of Arab Culture <i>Prof. S. Lane-Poole, Litt.D.</i></p> <p>98. The Genius of Chinese Art and Literature <i>Lionel Giles</i></p> | <p>99. A Study of American Origins <i>T. Athol Joyce</i></p> <p>100. The Adventures of the Normans <i>C. W. Previté-Orton</i></p> <p>101. Byzantinism in its Varied Aspects. <i>Prof. F. H. Marshall</i></p> |
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**W**ITH the final break-up of the Roman Empire—the 'world state' that had given a certain homogeneity to history in the West for more than half a thousand years—a period of confusion set in, of destruction and reconstruction, of the stirring of new forces. It is often known as the Dark Ages, but the obscurity is due not so much to any lack of historical material as to the difficulty of finding connecting threads amid the tangle of warring purposes. In western Europe the outstanding movements are the consolidation of the Teutonic invaders into nationalities on the wreckage of the old Roman provinces, the rise of the Papacy, the birth of the Holy Roman Empire under Charlemagne and its re-birth under Otto the Great, and the endless struggle of the two partners to the theory, temporal and spiritual; in the East the appearance of Islam and its conquering advance outweigh all other events. But there is one element of continuity that provides a double link, between past and future, between East and West, and has accordingly been chosen to name our Fourth Era: the Byzantine Empire, heir of the Roman traditions and Europe's bulwark against Islam

# TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XIV

- 478 End of the Western Roman Empire.  
 477 Restoration of Zeno; fall of Basiliscus.  
 Recognition of Odoacer as patrician in Italy.  
 Hunneric Vandal king; Gundobad Burgundian king.  
 478 War of Zeno with Ostrogoths, under King Theodoric the Amal and Theodoric Strabo; to 482.  
 481 Clovis (Chlodwig) the Merwing becomes king of the Salian Franks, and begins the subjugation of north and central Gaul.  
 482 Zeno's Henoticon; breach with Roman Church.  
 483 Theodoric recognized as master of the soldiers.  
 484 Revolt of Leontius in Syria.  
 486 Clovis subjects Riparian Franks and extirpates other branches of the Merwing family.  
 488 Accession of Kobad in Persia. Ten years of dynastic conflict.  
 489 Theodoric invades Italy to supplant Odoacer.  
 491 Odoacer, defeated, holds out at Ravenna.  
 Anastasius succeeds Zeno (to 518).  
 Landing of Aella in Sussex (trad.).  
 493 Odoacer capitulates and is assassinated.  
 Theodoric king of Italy, nominally viceroy.  
 Clovis, a pagan, marries the orthodox Christian princess, Clothilda of Burgundy.  
 495 Landing of Cerdic and West Saxons (trad.).  
 496 Franks adopt orthodox, not Arian, Christianity.  
 Clovis overthrows the Alemanni.  
 498 Burgundian war of Clovis.  
 Kobad restores monarchical power in Persia.  
 c. 500 India: White Huns invade Punjab. Break up of Gupta Empire. Starting point of Rajput traditions.  
 502 Persian war of Anastasius.  
 507 Clovis in alliance with Burgundy attacks Visigoths in Aquitaine. Their king, Alaric II, killed.  
 508-510 Theodoric intervenes, checks Clovis, drives back Burgundy, establishes Amalric as Visigothic king in Spain and western Provence under guardianship of Theudis; places a Roman prefect (Liberius) at Arles; but leaves Clovis in possession of Aquitaine.  
 511 Clovis dies. Quadruple division of Frank dominion between his sons. Eastward expansion and development of Austrasian kingdom under Theuderic, to 533, and Theudebert to 548.  
 518 Justin I succeeds Anastasius at Constantinople. Henoticon withdrawn; reconciliation with Rome.  
 520 English checked in Britain at Mt. Badon  
 524 Death of the philosopher Boethius.  
 526 Theodoric dies. Athalaric king, under guardianship of his mother Amalaswintha.  
 527 Accession and marriage of Justinian.  
 529 Justinian's Code, First Edition.  
 530 Persian incursions. Victory of Belisarius at Dara.  
 531 Amalric dies; Theudis elected king of Visigoths.  
 532 Nika Riots; suppressed by Belisarius.  
 Peace with Persia.  
 Burgundy annexed by the sons of Clovis.  
 533 Belisarius obliterates the Vandal kingdom.  
 Justinian's Pandects (Digest) and Institutes.  
 534 Justinian's revised Code.  
 Athalaric dies. Amalaswintha makes Theodahad king.  
 535 Amalaswintha murdered by Theodahad.  
 Belisarius in Sicily.  
 536 Theodahad deposed and killed; Wittiges elected.  
 Belisarius captures and holds Rome.  
 537 Wittiges besieges Rome; Franks invade N. Italy.  
 538 Wittiges buys off Franks by ceding Roman Provence.  
 539 Belisarius besieges Wittiges in Ravenna.  
 540 Fall of Ravenna. Belisarius leaves Italy.  
 541 Chosroes invades Syria and sacks Antioch.  
 Goths led by Totila begin reconquest of Italy.  
 Chosroes transfers the Persian war to Colchis.  
 542 General paralysis caused by the Great Plague  
 544 Belisarius sent with feeble force to Italy.  
 545 Five years' truce with Persia.  
 546 Totila captures and evacuates Rome.  
 547 Belisarius reoccupies Rome.  
 548 Belisarius recalled. Totila dominates Italy.  
 Theudis killed in Spain; rival Visigoth kings.  
 549 Landing of Ida in Northumbria (trad.).  
 550 Justinian's troops occupy Andalusia.  
 Third Persian war.  
 552 Narses sent to recover Italy. Fall of Totila at battle of Taginae.  
 Introduction of silk-worms from China.  
 553 Last stand and annihilation of the Ostrogoths  
 554 Narses shatters a Frank invasion.  
 555 Narses rules Italy from Ravenna.  
 558 Chlothar (last surviving son of Clovis), king of all the Franks.  
 561 End of Persian war.  
 Frank kingdom divided between Chlothar's four sons.  
 565 Deaths of Justinian and Belisarius  
 Justin II emperor.  
 566 Avars and Lombards on the Danube.  
 Marriage of the Visigoth sisters Brunhild and Galswintha to Sigibert and Chilperic.  
 567 Chilperic murders Galswintha and marries Fredegonde; seventeen years of civil war.  
 568 The Lombards under Alboin invade Italy.  
 569 Birth of Mahomet.  
 571 Leovigild king of Visigoths till 586. He drives the Romans to the coast and practically subjugates all Spain, defeats a Frank attack, and masters the nobles.  
 572 Persian war renewed.  
 573 Lombards, masters of North Italy and of provinces in the south, are kingless till 584.  
 575 Death of Sigibert; ascendancy of Chilperic.  
 577 English reach Bristol channel. B. of Deorham.  
 578 Emperor Tiberius succeeds Justin II.  
 582 Emperor Maurice succeeds Tiberius.  
 584 Authari elected Lombard king.  
 Chilperic killed; Guntram of Burgundy dominant.  
 588 Reccared king of Visigoths. He abandons Arianism for Orthodox Christianity; Arianism dies out, leading to development of ecclesiastical ascendancy, and rivalry of the churchmen and nobles.  
 590 Gregory the Great, pope; to 604.  
 Agilulf Lombard king.  
 591 Accession of Chosroes II in Persia, by help of Emperor Maurice. End of Persian war.  
 593 Death of Guntram. Brunhild in Austrasia to 614.  
 595 Wars of Maurice with Avars and others on Danube.  
 598 Kent Christianised by mission of Augustine.  
 602 Mutiny and usurpation of Phocas; Maurice killed.  
 604 Death of Gregory the Great.  
 606 Chosroes II invades Syria as avenger of Maurice.  
 Continuous expansion of Persian power.  
 India: Rise of Empire of Kanauj under Harsha.  
 609 Revolt of Heraclius the elder in Africa.  
 610 Phocas is overthrown by the younger Heraclius, who is proclaimed emperor at Constantinople.  
 Mahomet's Vision and Call as Prophet of Allah.  
 613 Mahomet's first converts at Mecca.  
 Northumbrian English reach west coast (Chester).  
 Wales severed from north and south Britons.  
 614 Chlothar II king of all the Franks. Rise of the Austrasian, Neustrian and Burgundian mayors of the palace.  
 Chosroes completes conquest of Syria by taking Jerusalem and carrying off the True Cross.  
 616 Persian conquest of Egypt.  
 617 Supremacy of Northumbria and adoption of Christianity under Edwin.  
 620 Persians overrun Asia Minor.  
 621 The Eastern Empire devotes itself to a Holy War headed by Heraclius in person against Persia.  
 622 Mahomet and his Companions withdraw from hostile Mecca to Medina; the 'Hijra' (Hajira) dating the Year One of the Mahomedan Era.  
 First Persian campaign of Heraclius, who drives a wedge between the Persian forces in Asia Minor and Syria.  
 623 Mahomet resolves to propagate Islam by the sword.  
 First battle (Bedr) between Medina and Mecca.  
 623-627 Victorious campaigns of Heraclius in and beyond Mesopotamia.  
 623-628 Arnulf of Metz and Pepin the Old, mayor of the palace; Dagobert king, in Austrasia.  
 628 Persians and Avars besieging Constantinople are completely repulsed.  
 627 Decisive victory of Heraclius at Nineveh.  
 Mahomet's letter to Heraclius.  
 628 Mahomet comes to terms with Mecca.  
 Fall of Chosroes; end of Persian War; all Roman possessions restored.  
 630 Final submission of Mecca.  
 631 Mahomet designs the conquest of Syria.  
 632 Death of Mahomet. Accession of Abu Bekr as first khalif.

## Chronicle XIV

# EAST AND WEST IN FERMENT: 476—632

**I**N A.D. 476 ended the twelve months' nominal reign of the last phantom emperor of the Western Roman Empire, when Romulus Augustulus was deposed by the Herulian or Scirian Odoacer, disappearing into a peaceful obscurity. Technically, no change had occurred in the imperial constitution; actually, the date marks a stage in the disintegration of a great world empire.

'Patrician' was the official title claimed by Odoacer as an imperial officer from the emperor Zeno. It was not a title which carried with it specific functions; but practically it meant that the Augustus who conferred it conferred with it vice-regal powers; in the case of Odoacer, the vice-royalty of Italy and Noricum. The title of king which Odoacer also used was derived not from the emperor but from Odoacer's election to this dignity by his miscellaneous Teutonic host.

### Zeno recognizes Odoacer's claim

**A**T the moment when Odoacer deposed Romulus, the emperor Zeno was fighting for his crown with the usurper Basiliscus. That revolt had been crushed when in the following year, 477, the deputation arrived from Rome; not to inform him of the election of a new Augustus, but to desire his ratification of the election of Flavius Odoacer as his own lieutenant in the West, a second Augustus being superfluous. Zeno promptly acceded. He was in no position to refuse recognition to the de facto ruler; the West must take care of itself; and it could at any rate do no harm if the ruler chose to call himself the subordinate instead of the colleague of the Augustus at Constantinople.

In that same year, 477, died Geiseric. He was succeeded by his son Hunneric, who was his peer in iniquity, but not in ability. Under him and his successors the Vandal kingdom survived the death of its founder for 57 years, to be obliterated as it deserved in A.D. 533.

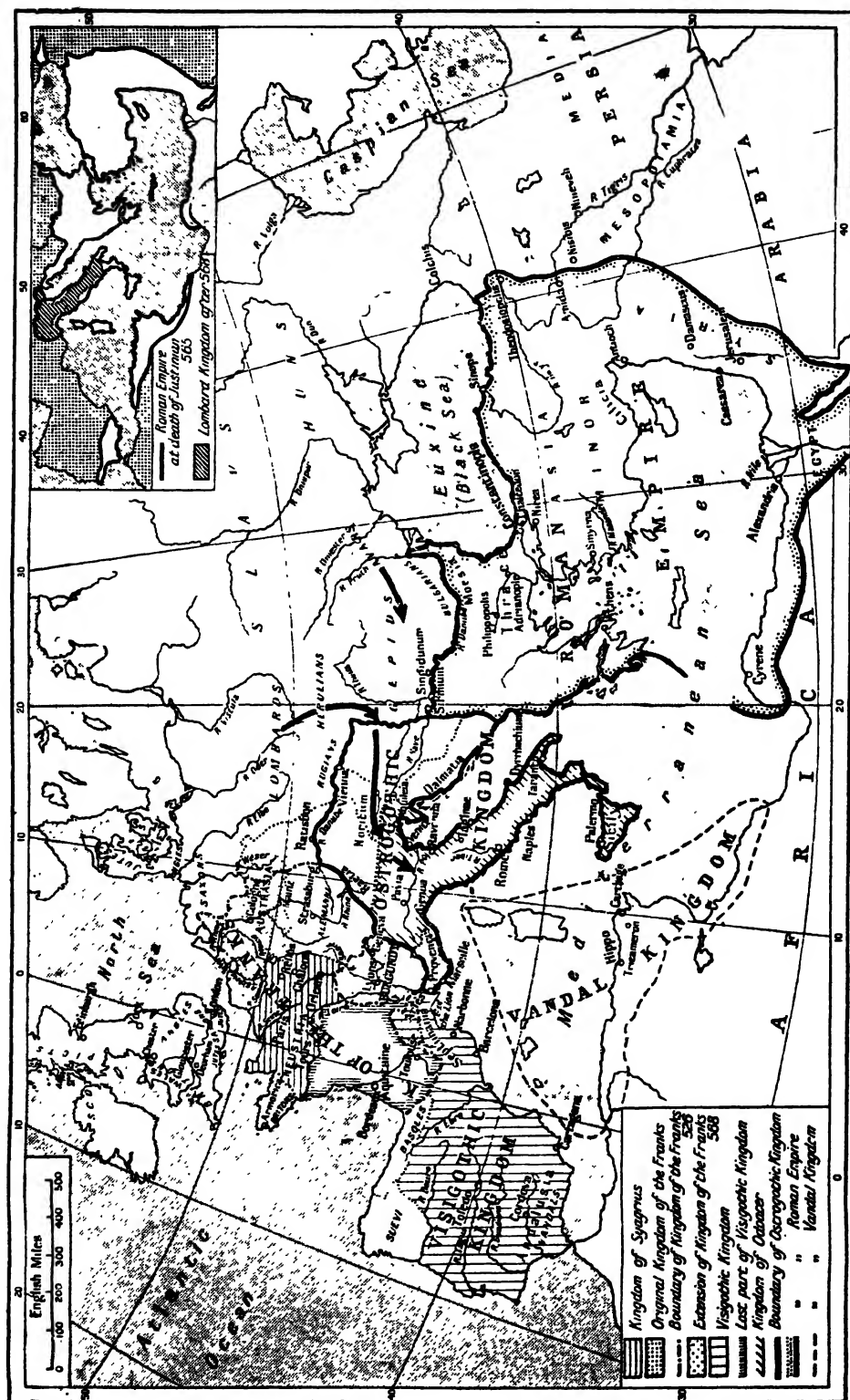
When Basiliscus in 475 ejected Zeno and snatched the diadem, he did it by the aid of Teutonic mercenaries, whose commander was the Ostrogothic soldier of fortune Theodoric, called Strabo—the wall-eyed or one-eyed. When Zeno came back with his Isaurians and suppressed the futile Basiliscus in 477, Theodoric Strabo retired with his troops into the Balkan mountains, and invited Zeno to make him his master of the soldiers or take the consequences.

### The Fortunes of the Ostrogoths

**T**HE Ostrogoths have hitherto played only a fleeting part in our story. They had fallen under the sway of Attila. But on Attila's death in 453 they recovered their independence, like the rest of his Teutonic dependents. They had come down to the Danube, and then, on the Visigothic precedent, they had been admitted to settle within the borders of the Empire, en masse, in Moesia. The Visigoths had to content themselves with a king of the house of the Balts; the Amals, god-descended, still reigned among the Ostrogoths; and at this critical hour their king was the youthful but already famous warrior, Theodoric the Amal. To him, since a rival Ostrogothic leader could hardly be to his taste, Zeno turned for aid in the suppression of Theodoric Strabo.

It was a risky game. The old fox very soon persuaded the young lion that their business was to unite, not to fight each other, which would be playing into the hands of the crafty Zeno. They combined and marched on Constantinople. But unless the port could be blockaded, the capital could laugh besiegers to scorn, though they might ravage the peninsula. Zeno tried, and failed, to detach the Amal from Strabo, but when he reversed the process he succeeded. Strabo went over; but what was now the war between the Ostrogoths and the Empire went on for four years (479-483), with all the honours





# SHIFTING BOUNDARIES OF ROMAN AND TEUTON POWERS IN THE AGE OF THEODORIC, CLOVIS AND JUSTINIAN

The resounding exploits of the confused period covered in the present Chronicle were the establishment of the Ostrogothic kingdom of Theodoric the Amal in Italy (488-91); the destruction of the Vandal kingdom by Belisarius in 533; the eviction of the Ostrogoths from Italy by him and his successor Narses, with the resulting brilliant but hollow expansion of the Eastern Roman Empire; and the intermittent hostilities between the Empire and Persia.

Far more important, however, though less spectacular, was the Frank advance under Clovis

## East and West in Ferment



**EMPEROR ZENO AND ODOACER**

Zeno was ruling at Constantinople when Odoacer deposed Romulus Augustulus. That Odoacer regarded himself as a lieutenant of the emperor is shown by coins that he struck bearing Zeno's image (left), though others (right) bore his own.

*British Museum*

on the side of Theodoric the Amal. The other died, and the emperor was troubled with conspiracies and the fear of conspiracies. So Zeno and Theodoric came to terms, the Ostrogoth being made master of the soldiers, and receiving fresh grants of land for his followers.

Then came the revolt of a certain Leontius in Syria, who appealed for aid to the Persian king Balas, and to Odoacer. Before the aid which was promised could arrive, Zeno had crushed the rebellion by the help of Theodoric. But such a helper was dangerous; the attitude of Odoacer was menacing. All might be well if the two could be embroiled.

In 488 Zeno matured his plan. Like Alaric, Theodoric was more than ready to exchange Moesia for Italy. The emperor dismissed his disloyal lieutenant in the West, and appointed the trusty king of the Ostrogoths in his place.

Odoacer had been ruling Italy for a dozen years with an unquestioned sway, when his authority was denounced by the same emperor from whom he had demanded and received it. He was a strong man and a wise man, who did what he had to do and attempted nothing beyond the reasonable range of achievement. What he had to do was to establish peace and order in Italy, where ten different emperors had been pulled down and set up in the course of twenty-one years; and to secure the north and north-eastern Alpine frontiers, Raetia, Noricum and—as belonging to Italy—western Dalmatia. To this end he had to preserve the loyalty of the miscellaneous host which had elected him king;

and this could only be done at the expense of the native Italians who, at least since the days of Stilicho, had resented the domination of a barbarian soldiery, and had more than once or twice, when a convenient opportunity offered, displayed their resentment by massacres.

With Gaul and Spain Odoacer did not greatly concern himself. In fact, he was content to maintain friendly relations with Euric and his successor Alaric II, the kings of the Visigoths, and Gundobad,



**PRUDENT RULER OF THE EAST**

This ivory diptych commemorates the consulship of Anastasius, a court official of wide experience and high character who later, on the death of Zeno without heir, was appointed his successor and ruled the Eastern Empire from 491 to 518.

*British Museum (cast)*

## Chronicle XIV. 476-632

king of the Burgundians. Euric had already extended his effective dominion over the greater part of Spain as well as Aquitaine. Gundobad had established himself on the Saône and the upper Rhône ; and Odoacer had no compunction in ceding to Euric the seaboard of the Gulf of the Lion. A Roman, Syagrius, was still holding together central Gaul, but the north-west had gone, and the north-east was already passing under the domination of the Salian Franks, whose habitat was between the Scheldt and the Somme.

In Raetia, however, the Rugians, after the scattering of the Huns, had established themselves with aggressive designs. Against them Odoacer sent a force which shattered their power but evacuated the territory, bringing back the inhabitants—by their own desire—to be settled in less disturbed quarters on Italian soil. Odoacer wanted to recover western Dalmatia, but the ex-emperor Julius Nepos was established there by the authority of Leo I and of Zeno ; it was not till Nepos was assassinated in 480 that the Patrician was able to annex it to his dominion.

### Theodoric wrests Italy from Odoacer

**O**DOACER had no thought of acquiescing in his deposition. In fact, when Theodoric marched against him he offered a magnificent resistance. The odds were all in favour of the younger man, who was an ideal leader, at the head of an armed nation, with a tradition of national kingship and the precedent of Alaric to urge it on. Italy, apart from the army, had no love for Odoacer, and owed allegiance not to him but to the emperor whom he was defying. His own men were for the most part loyal, but the Goths among them could only be half-hearted. Thrice his forces were beaten in the field in 489 ; yet he held out in the almost impregnable Ravenna for a year and a half after he

was finally driven behind its walls in 491. The end came when the place was starved out, and Theodoric committed the one act of treachery which stained his fame. Odoacer capitulated on the offer of generous terms, and was assassinated immediately after his surrender.



### THEODORIC THE OSTROGOTH

Zeno's diplomacy turned the energies of Theodoric the Ostrogoth from the Balkans to Italy, where, crushing Odoacer, he set up a brilliant Ostrogothic kingdom (491)

*British Museum*

A year before the fall of Ravenna, Zeno died. During his reign the Balkan peninsula had been devastated and very largely depopulated first by the Ostrogothic war, and then by the departure of the Ostrogoths ; but it offered no very tempting bait to the Slavs and non-Aryan tribes from the region of the Volga—the Bulgarians—who were swarming down to the Danube again. When the Goths were gone, there was probably a considerable and continuous infiltration of the former, and an occasional raid by the latter, but no serious invasion for some time to come. The peace of Asia Minor and Syria had been disturbed by the insurrections of Basiliscus and Leontius, but there was no threat of a permanent disruption of the Empire in the East such as was taking place in the West.

Zeno was not a person who commands much respect, but he had some astuteness ; he had no disposition to play the tyrant ; he was cautious to the verge of pusillanimity ; and he was a lover of compromises—qualities which, if not altogether admirable, tended to tranquillity and security. But the act by which he is best remembered was a well-intentioned attempt to establish a religious compromise which was a pathetic failure. He promulgated the Henoticon, the Instrument of Union which sought to provide a common formula that could be accepted both by the Orthodox and the Monophysites, the two intensely hostile parties into which the Church in the East was now divided. The result, however, was that both parties impartially denounced the emperor and each raged against the other more furiously

## East and West in Ferment

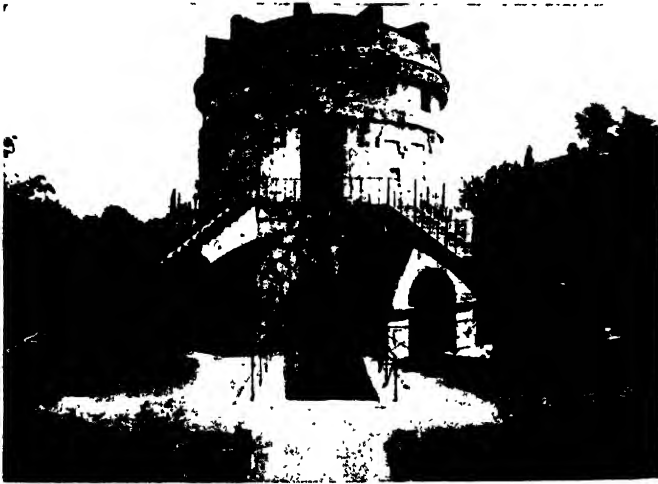
than before. Constantinople from top to bottom was divided between the supporters of the rival clubs (primarily the sporting 'clubs' of the Hippodrome), the Monophysite 'greens' and the Orthodox 'blues,' who were the champions of either ecclesiastical faction.

Zeno died leaving no obvious heir, and without having appointed a successor. An eminently wise choice, mainly influenced by Zeno's widow, Ariadne, bestowed the diadem on Anastasius, an experienced official of the highest character, and

Gaul had begun his aggressive advance. Clovis is the name by which everyone knows Chlodwig (Ludwig, Lewis) the Merovingian (Merwing), the first king of France. The clans drew their chiefs or kings from the royal family of Merwings. In 481, Clovis succeeded his father Childeric in one of these kingships on the river Scheldt; when the mighty Visigothic king Euric was at the height of his power. In 485, Euric died and was succeeded by his young son Alaric II. Euric would probably have made short work of

Clovis, who, in conjunction with his kinsmen, took the opportunity of starting on a career of aggression, being one and twenty.

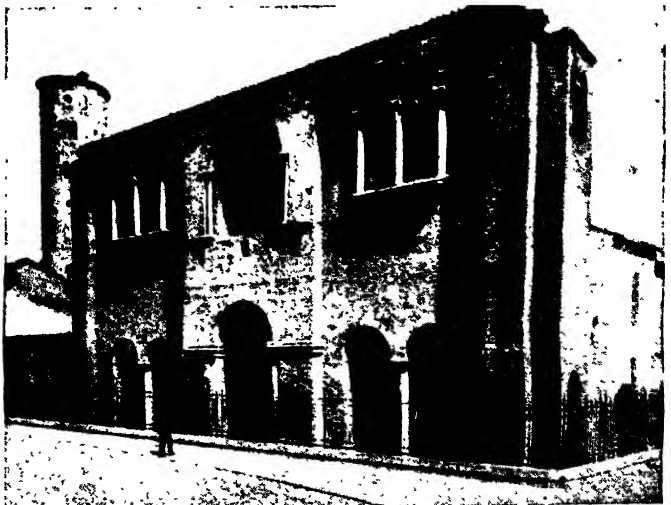
The Franks fell upon Syagrius, patrician of central Gaul. The Visigoths under existing circumstances were not disposed to come to the rescue. In the next four or five years, Clovis conquered most of northern Gaul, and proceeded to consolidate his personal position by the wholesale suppression of the Merovingian kings of the other clans. The next step



universally and deservedly respected. He was already fifty-three on his accession (491); but he lived and reigned, to the great benefit of the empire, till 518.

Theodoric (A.D. 455-526) was thirty-eight years old when the death of Odoacer left him undisputed king of Italy—the title which he assumed—in 493. His reign of thirty-three years places him among the great rulers of men; though most of his work perished after his death, since there was no second Theodoric to bring it to completion.

By this time the king of the Salian Franks on the north-eastern frontier of what had already ceased to be Roman



### REMINDERS OF THEODORIC AT RAVENNA

The most tangible relic of Theodoric's splendid reign that still exists at his capital, Ravenna, is his mausoleum (top), a rotunda with a monolithic roof weighing some 300 tons. The ruins called 'Theodoric's Palace' (lower) were more probably an addition made by a Byzantine exarch in Lombard times.

*Photos, Alinari*

## Chronicle XIV. 476-632

was to make himself king of the other group of Franks on the Rhine, to harry the Alemanni out of the neighbouring territory, and to make friends with the Burgundian Gundobad, whom he did not as yet wish to challenge.

Instead, he married Gundobad's niece, who, curiously, happened to be not an Arian but an orthodox Christian; with the natural consequence that in 476 the heathen Clovis and his Franks were baptised into the orthodox Faith. All the other Christian German kings were Arians. (For the distinction between the two beliefs see Chap. 88.) By embracing Catholic orthodoxy, Clovis enlisted on the side of the Franks—as against the Arian Goths and Burgundians—all the Latin populations and all the influence of the Church which looked to the pope, the bishop of Rome, as its head.

Clovis now thought himself strong enough to attack Gundobad; but after the first surprise got soundly beaten and hastened to obtain a reconciliation. For his eyes were turning to Alaric and the Visigothic kingdom, on which, after an experimental move in 504, frustrated by the king of Italy, he opened his attack in 507, in conjunction with Gundobad.

### Theodoric's Policy of Consolidation

**H**ITHERTO Theodoric had been mainly concerned with the organization and development of his Italian kingdom. He desired only friendly relations with his fellow kings, with each of whom he sought matrimonial alliance; at a very early stage he married his two daughters to Alaric and the heir of Gundobad, and himself married the sister of Clovis; he even gave his own sister to the Vandal king Thrasamund, Hunneric's nephew. None of these kings could attack another without risk of finding the mightiest of them all ranged on the side of his adversary. When Clovis attacked Gundobad, Theodoric would have intervened, if the Burgundian had not very soon made intervention superfluous. He had stopped Clovis in 504, and would have stopped him in 507, if he had not at the moment been engaged in a difference with Anastasius over the Illyrian boundary—a dispute

which encouraged the emperor to 'bestow patrician honours on the Frank. Evidently it was Theodoric's aim not only to keep the peace himself but to prevent others from breaking it.

When Clovis did attack Alaric, his excuse—in spite of his alliance with Gundobad—was the Arian Alaric's persecution of his Catholic subjects. Clovis marched on Aquitaine, Gundobad on Provence. Clovis defeated and killed Alaric; the succession of Alaric's legitimate son Amalric—Theodoric's grandson—was disputed by an elder but illegitimate son Gesalic, who held his ground in Provence while the loyalists were driven out of Aquitaine into Spain. Clovis was master of Aquitaine—in fact, of all Gaul except the old 'Province' in the south-east. In 508, however, Theodoric intervened, though his quarrel with Anastasius was not yet settled, routed Franks and Burgundians before Arles, suppressed Gesalic, confirmed Amalric as king of the Visigoths in Spain under his own guardianship, established a Roman prefect at Arles, and left Aquitaine to Clovis. Clovis died in 511, when the Frank inheritance was divided between his four sons; but he had founded the French monarchy.

Theodoric reigned in Italy, and as guardian of the Visigothic kingdom, with undiminished power till his death in 526; this dominion including the seaboard of the Gulf of the Lion. No one ventured to attack or to challenge him, and aggression was not his business. The rest of Gaul he left to itself. As king of Italy, he was king of the Goths and other Germans, and at the same time king of the Italians. The recognition of this dualism, coupled with an unqualified even-handedness in the treatment of all his subjects, was the basis of his statesmanship; but the dualism could not yet yield to unification.

### Internal Conditions in Italy

On his accession, Theodoric satisfied his Ostrogoths mainly if not entirely with the land vacant by the fall of so many of Odoacer's followers. The Ostrogoths and other Germans, planted on the soil, lived under their own Germanic laws; the Italians under the Roman law adminis-

## East and West in Ferment



### **MOST POWERFUL EMPEROR OF THE EAST**

Justinian, in whose reign the Eastern Empire was at its height, is commemorated by mosaics at Ravenna. This (an old photograph taken before recent wholesale restorations) is in the Basilica of S. Apollinare Nuovo—another in S. Vitale is in the colour plate facing page 2302.

*Photo, Alinari*

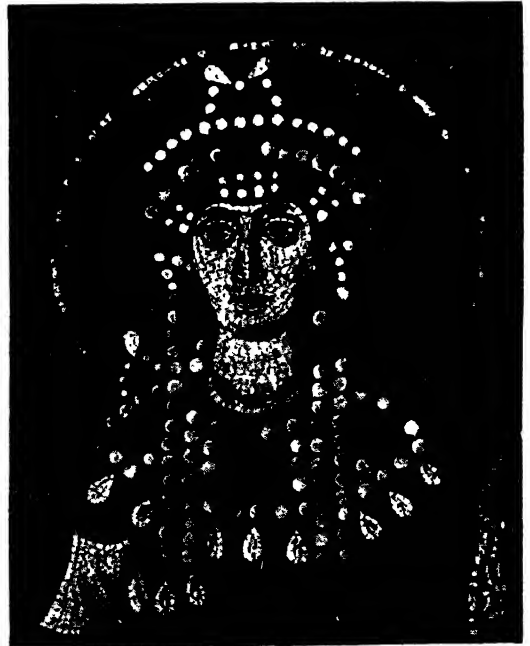
tered by Italian officials, as under the old system ; mixed tribunals adjudicated upon cases in which the parties were mixed. He allowed neither race nor creed to stand in the way of any man's advancement ; he sent the Roman Liberius to Arles, because he was the best man ; Italians as well as Goths had places on his councils.

Theodoric was, of course, an Arian, but the Orthodox had nothing to complain of except that Arians were not repressed. He protected the unpopular Jews as sternly as the Christians ; he repudiated persecution on the ground that no man can be compelled really to believe what he is told to say he believes. His financial organization materially relieved the burden of taxation and, at the same time, filled the treasury. He was the ablest soldier of the day, but after his accession he waged no war which was not almost forced upon him. He inaugurated his reign in Italy by a crime ; at the close of his long

life he became suspicious and stained his name by acts of cruel tyranny ; but not by these aberrations must he be judged.

Theodoric was past seventy when he died. The son-in-law whom he had chosen to be his successor died before him, and his heirs—for he had no son—were his daughter, Amalaswintha, and her young son, Athalaric. The fabric of which Theodoric had laid the foundations was doomed never to be builded. His rule over the Italians, however able and just, was the rule of an alien who was also a heretic ; and the Ostrogoths were too turbulent to be ruled by any hand less firm than that of the great king now dead.

Anastasius died, an old man, after a highly creditable reign, eight years before Theodoric, in 518. His rule had been that of a sound and experienced administrator, and he had done his best to calm the theological animosities which were reproduced in the civil factions of the Eastern capital. He concerned himself with the West only when Theodoric's



### **ACTRESS CONSORT OF JUSTINIAN**

The colour plate facing page 2303 gives the whole mosaic of which this is a part. It is in the Basilica of S. Vitale, Ravenna, and shows Theodora, the plaything of all Constantinople, who rose to be the empress of Justinian.

*Photo, Alinari*



# - ONE OF THE FORTRESSES THROUGH WHICH CONSTANTINOPLE RULED AFRICA

After Belisarius had reconquered Africa from the Vandals and restored it to the Roman Empire, that is—it was ruled by a succession of officers appointed from Constantinople. There were the Prefects of the Praefecture of Africa on the civil side, and the *Magistri Militum* ('masters of the soldiery') later replaced by *exarchs* (591): corrupt incompetents, many of them, whose only duty was to squeeze as much taxation as possible out of the land for Justinian's depleted treasury. This is a reconstruction of the Byzantine fortress at Haidra on the borders of the modern Tunisia and Algeria.

From *Dichl*, 'L'Afrique byzantine'.



## East and West in Ferment

activities in Illyria involved him in a boundary dispute with his powerful lieutenant. Thrace and Moesia were vexed by Bulgarian raids from across the Danube, and Anastasius built a great defensive wall fifty miles long to hold the raiders in check. The Isaurian troops, who had made themselves so unpopular in the capital, were disbanded, returned home to their accustomed occupation as brigands, and were not suppressed without some difficulty.

There had been no serious collision with Persia for a century. The Sassanid kings of Persia had for some generations been losing control over the nobles; and the tribes known as the White Huns or Ephthalites—a people quite distinct from the Huns proper—had been hammering the East and developing a very considerable power in the region of the Oxus. The Sassanid Empire was waning. But a revival of the monarchy was now taking place under Kobad (Kavad), who succeeded in 488 to the throne, on which he had not established himself securely till 499. In 502 he revived a treaty claim on the Empire for certain payments for frontier defences which had long been dropped; and, meeting refusal, he invaded Mesopotamia. He captured Amida—Nisibis he held already—but in 505 the Ephthalites again gave trouble, the imperial arms met with some successes, and peace was restored on the pre-war basis.

**T**HE wars of Anastasius were merely disturbing episodes, significant only as warnings of possible troubles in the future; they neither added to nor materially detracted from the general credit of his reign. Like Theodoric, he left a well-filled treasury.

He left no heir, and the diadem was unexpectedly secured by an elderly Illyrian officer, Justin, the respectable uncle of a very remarkable nephew, Justinian, who succeeded him in 527, the year after



VANDAL RULER OF ROMAN AFRICA

A mosaic found at Carthage shows a horseman quitting his villa for the hunt. His features and dress are markedly different from those in the earlier African mosaics; and it is not unjustifiable to regard him as one of the Vandalic invaders or, less probably, of the Byzantines who ousted them.

*British Museum*

Theodoric's death. Justin continued the safe policy of his predecessor. He was the first of the emperors since the extinction of the line of Theodosius who thoroughly satisfied the Catholic party; and he would have persecuted the Arians, but for a threat from Theodoric of reprisals against the orthodox in the West. Zeno's Henoticon had caused a schism between the Eastern and Western churches, which was healed when Justin withdrew it.

Justin was an old soldier who had served in the imperial armies for some fifty years. At the end of his nine years' rule he associated with himself on the throne his nephew Justinian (A.D. 527–565), who was then between thirty-five and forty, and had been practically his colleague throughout the reign. Justinian on his accession was already thoroughly conversant with the whole system of administration. He had just scandalised society by marrying a lowly-born dancer, Theodora, whose reputation was notorious; but her loyalty to her spouse after the marriage never wavered, nor did her influence over him wane; and once at least it was her unflinching courage that saved him from disaster at a dangerous crisis (see page 2298).



Justinian's permanent legacy to the world was his great codification of Roman law; it became the basis of almost all legal systems in Europe (see Chap. 78). But this was only, from his point of view, a part of his vast scheme for raising the Roman Empire to an unprecedented height of power and magnificence; a scheme which involved an expenditure on war and on splendour, especially on building, which wrecked the financial resources of the Empire; a consummation materially advanced by the great pestilence of A.D. 542, which was as disastrous as the Black Death eight centuries later.

The vast sums expended on building by Justinian do not demand detailed attention. The trouble was that the Empire could not afford them out of normal revenue, and they had to be raised by abnormal taxation which crippled trade and industry of every kind, at the same time that a very heavy war-taxation was demanded by the revived imperialism of the emperor's policy. The contrast with Theodoric's methods in Italy is notable, for the Goth observed a wholesome ratio between public works of great economic value and expenditure which was merely impressive; while warrant was found for the latter in the fact that the burden of taxation was reduced. Theodoric left a full treasury at the end of a reign little shorter than Justinian's, who left the Empire exhausted and the treasury drained dry. Justinian's predecessors had not been men of genius, but they had succeeded in holding the Empire in the East together largely by

leaving the West to take care of itself as best it could, and abstaining from all schemes of aggrandisement. Justinian could scarcely perhaps have avoided his

Persian wars; his suppression of the Vandal kingdom was more than justified, though in any case it could hardly have survived much longer; but his reconquest of Italy benefited neither the East nor the West.

The first Persian war was forced upon Justinian in the year following his accession, 528. It brought into prominence Belisarius (505-565), the brilliant soldier to whom the emperor was mainly indebted for the military glories of his reign. Kobad, as we saw, had revived the power of the Sassanid dynasty in Persia, and had fought a drawn battle with Anastasius. Now, after twenty years of peace, he renewed his aggression and invaded Mesopotamia. Nothing of a decisive character occurred till 530. Belisarius, the very young officer in command of the forces on the frontier, had previously only been able to stand on guard; but in that year he routed a much larger Persian force, in what resolved itself into a great cavalry engagement, by tactics which recall the battle of Marathon, where there was no cavalry, and the tactics of Hannibal at Cannae. Kobad died next year, and his son Chosroes (Khusru), as yet insecurely seated on the throne, made peace.

The Vandals in Africa, even when Geiseric's power was at its height, had never been more than an armed garrison in the midst of a wide and intensely hostile, if defenceless, country. Since



## BRAVE DAUGHTER OF THEODORIC

It is almost certain that the figure on this panel of an ivory diptych is Amalaswintha, the valiant daughter of Theodoric, who attempted to continue his policy in Italy after his death.

*British Museum (cast)*

## East and West in Ferment

Geiseric's death their enemies had been gathering strength, though they still held their domination by sheer brute force, and the usurper, Geilamir, who seized the crown in 530, had replied with singular insolence to the protest of Justinian. There was warrant enough for drastic action.

The emperor, however, was at the moment not yet free from the Persian entanglement; and just then the capital broke out in what is known as the Nika insurrection (see Chap. 85). The rebellion was utterly crushed; the unlucky figurehead was himself beheaded with his brother; a truce with Persia followed the death of Kobad; and in 533 Belisarius surprised the unexpectant Vandals by landing in Africa—though his force numbered

only fifteen thousand men. The Vandal force on the spot was routed before Carthage, which joyfully hailed the victor as a deliverer. Geilamir retreated to the West and gathered the forces which there had not been time to collect at first, while every city was flinging open its gates to Belisarius. The decisive battle was fought in December at Tricameron, where the Vandals were virtually annihilated; and though Geilamir escaped he soon realized that a further struggle was hopeless, and surrendered himself—to be relegated to an easy retirement in Phrygia. But the Vandal kingdom was wiped off the face of the earth. Belisarius with fifteen thousand men had succeeded where the vast armaments of Leo I had failed ignominiously.

He returned in triumph to Constantinople, to make ready for a fresh task.

### Exploits of Belisarius in Italy

**F**OR eight years after Theodoric's death, his daughter Amalaswintha strove valiantly to carry on Theodoric's work in her son's name; a thing beyond the power of any woman—or any man not of heroic mould. In 534 the boy died; and Amalaswintha procured the succession for Theodoric's nephew Theodahad (in con-

junction with herself), an Amal, clever in his way, but a poltroon who was both worthless and ambitious. The queen had many enemies; Theodahad conspired with them, captured her and had her murdered, giving Justinian the warrant for intervention. The Goths were ready to fight against any intervention; and in 535 Belisarius with a small force landed in Sicily.

Theodoric had given the Italians admirably just and firm government, but they had never been able to reconcile themselves to the fact that the power was in the hands of aliens and Arians. The Goths were said to have 100,000 fighting men in the country, but the entire Italian population was on the side of the imperialist invaders, while the Goths themselves

were paralysed by the inaction of their king. In Sicily Belisarius was welcomed instead of being opposed. In the next spring he advanced through South Italy with seven thousand men, meeting no resistance till he reached Naples, while fifty thousand Goths lay about Rome. Then the Gothic army in despair deposed Theodahad, who was promptly murdered by a private enemy; and, as there was no Amal left, they elected as king Witiges, a valiant but stupid old warrior who had forgotten anything of generalship that he may once have known.

Instead of marching to overwhelm Belisarius, who had captured Naples, Witiges carried almost his entire army north to deal with a force of Franks who had seized the opportunity to pour through the Alps. Belisarius with his small force pounced on Rome, which the garrison evacuated in a panic as he entered it. Witiges made composition with the Franks, ceding Roman Provence to them, returned with the whole Gothic army, and laid siege to Rome, but never made the blockade complete, so that at first supplies and later reinforcements continually dribbled into the city. In spite of the huge circumvallation which had



COIN OF THEODAHAD

Theodahad, who had murdered Amalaswintha, Theodoric's daughter, was ruling the Ostrogoths in Italy when Belisarius, fresh from his victories in Africa, began his campaigns against them.

*British Museum*

to be held by only five thousand men, all attacks were repelled with heavy loss. After a year sufficient reinforcements from the East had arrived to enable Belisarius to take the offensive (538).

After two more years of campaigning, Witiges, shut up in Ravenna, would have accepted the generous terms offered by Justinian. The Goths would not have it, and actually offered the crown to Belisarius, who, without accepting it, beguiled them into opening the gates to him; whereupon he took possession in the name of Justinian. When Ravenna fell it seemed an easy matter to complete the conquest; and Belisarius was recalled to take up the command against the Persians, with whom a second war had broken out.

**W**ITIGES had, in fact, thought too late of creating a diversion by inciting the Persian to make an attack. Ravenna was on the point of falling when Chosroes in 540 flung himself on northern Syria, where he was not expected, and captured Antioch, whence he carried off great spoils. In the spring of 541, Witiges was a captive and Belisarius was in Mesopotamia; but Chosroes was far away, more profitably employed in overrunning the trans-Caucasian province of Colchis than in giving battle to Belisarius, who was awaiting an attack that was not delivered. Next year both armies were paralysed by an abnormally severe outbreak of the plague. In 543 Belisarius was recalled from the East to take up once more the western command from which he had been transferred; his successor met with reverses, and in 545 a five-years' truce was patched up with Chosroes.

The fall of Ravenna had not disposed of the Goth problem. The stubborn garrison at Pavia held out and proclaimed a new king, Hildebad. Half

a dozen imperial generals had been left in Italy, each with an independent command; they could not or would not co-operate, and the Goths rallied to the capable Hildebad, who recovered the plain of the Po. He was assassinated in 541, but a fresh champion arose—his nephew Baduila, better known as Totila, first of the knights of the Middle Ages, one of the rare heroes on whose name no stain has ever fastened; one who was more than worthy to be the successor of Theodoric.

The Italians might anathematise the Goths, but would not fight them. By the end of 542 Totila had routed the imperial armies in the field wherever he met them, had driven them all into a few fortified towns—Rome, Ravenna and some others—and was in effect master of Italy once more from north to south. He held his men in hand as resolutely as a Henry V or a Louis IX, protecting the population from all violence, and treating the garrisons that resisted him with a magnanimity of which the Plantagenet never dreamed. Belisarius had fallen woefully out of favour with Justinian and Theodora, but he was needed to cope with Totila. So in 543, as we have seen, he was sent again to Italy. But he was never given a fair chance by

his master. Instead of his devoted veterans he was allowed only a meagre force of raw recruits with which to fight the Goths, whose shaken moral had been thoroughly restored by a leader of brilliant ability and inspiring personality. Belisarius could gain no decisive advantage. In 545 Totila laid siege to Rome; Belisarius vainly attempted to relieve it, and it fell in 546. Totila removed the population and dismantled the defences. Justinian would send neither the men nor the money needed. Two years later the great captain was recalled at his own request, and



**BELISARIUS THE WARLIKE**

Next to Justinian on the observer's right, in the plate facing page 2302, may be seen a figure whose features are here enlarged. It has been suggested that it represents Belisarius.

*Photo, Alinari*

## East and West in Ferment

it seemed that Totila's ultimate triumph was all but certain. Belisarius had reoccupied and refortified Rome before his departure; but when he was gone Totila took it again.

Justinian was now at war with Persia for the third time. Nevertheless in 552 he made a great effort in the West which was crowned with unexpected success. He gave the Italian command to his chamberlain, the eunuch Narses, to whom he supplied the troops he had persistently withheld from Belisarius. The long struggle had depleted the Gothic army. Marching on Rome with a somewhat superior force, Narses brought Totila to a decisive engagement at Taginae. Belisarius and the Goths alike had relied almost wholly on cavalry, the arm which generally predominated in the Middle Ages. Narses won at Taginae as Bruce won at Bannockburn and Edward III at Crecy, by turning part of his cavalry into pikemen, against whom the Gothic horse, charging under a storm of arrows from the flanks, hurled themselves with desperate but useless valour.

Totila and his brother were slain and the Gothic army was all but annihilated. The Ostrogothic power was no more. Narses was still called upon to deal with a destructive Frankish incursion in North Italy, where he completely wiped out the whole invading force. But the ceaseless struggle which had been waged for twenty years had destroyed what might have become a regenerating force, and had left Italy depopulated and desolated; and the ruin was in no wise compensated by the re-establishment of the shadow of an imperial government under an 'exarch' at Ravenna. There was no effective attempt at rehabilitation.

Incidentally, Justinian sought to restore the imperial authority in Spain, where some cities were secured, occupied and garrisoned with imperial troops. The third Persian war was exclusively a struggle to recover Colchis, which the Persians had retained at the truce. Finally the peace of 555 restored it, in return for a substantial indemnity.

Justinian and Belisarius died in the same year, 565. The story that the old



TOTILA THE OSTROGOTH

Witiges the Ostrogoth was followed by Hildebad, Hildebad in 541 by Baduila or Totila, who found it easy enough to cope with the meagre levies allowed to Belisarius; until Narses, with an adequate army, defeated and slew him at Taginae.

*British Museum*

general was reduced to a pitiful beggary in his last days is happily mythical. The imperial succession passed undisputed to Justinian's nephew, Justin II.

The great emperor had concerned himself with the farther West only in his late years, when the fortunes of the Visigothic kingdom gave him the opportunity for recovering in Spain an imperial foothold, though it amounted to no more. When Theodoric intervened in 508 to secure the Visigoths from the joint onslaught of Burgundians and Franks, he allowed Clovis to retain Aquitaine, but established his own grandson Amalric in the Visigothic kingdom of Spain, to which a substantial portion of Provence was still attached. Amalric being a child, he entrusted the regency to Theudis, a capable soldier, who discharged his trust faithfully during the minority of Amalric, retained the administration till Amalric's death in 533, and was then elected to the kingship, since there was neither a Balt nor an Amal to succeed.

### Events among the Franks and Visigoths

**W**HILE Theodoric lived, no one ventured to attack his grandson, though the sons of Clovis hammered Burgundy almost out of existence. When Theodoric was gone, they fell upon Amalric, who was slain; but Theudis held his own till his death, at a great age, in 548. The Merovingians had shared Burgundy between themselves in 532, and in 538 Witiges bought off their attack on Italy by ceding to them the Ostrogothic or Roman half of Provence; but the other half, Septimania, remained under the Visigoths for a long time to come.

## Chronicle XIV. 476-632

Theudis was himself assassinated. Eighteen months later his successor, Theudigisel, was assassinated. Then there was a struggle between Agila and Athanagild for the succession; the latter invited Justinian to intervene. In 555 Agila was assassinated, and Athanagild found that he could not rid himself of the interveners. Before his death in 568 he had married his daughters Galswintha and Brunhild to the Merovingian kings Sigibert and Chilperic—with tragic consequences. The disruption of the Visigothic kingdom was arrested under his successors Leovigild (568-586) and Reccared (586-601).

Leovigild, a very capable soldier, thoroughly established his personal ascendancy over the nobles, smote the minor Suevic kingdoms, and recovered Andalusia, which had been occupied by Justinian's officers. He dealt successfully, as only a strong man could deal, with one of the two great stumbling-blocks which prevented the development of a strong kingdom, the independence of the nobles. But he only accentuated the other, the impossibility of reconciling the Catholic clergy and the Catholic population to the traditional Arianism of the dominant people. The Arianism of the Goths was bound up with their pride of race, and the religious intensified the racial antagonism.

### Religious Troubles in Visigothic Spain

**L**EOVIGILD'S son Reccared during his father's life gave no hint of the revolutionary project which he inaugurated immediately after the old king's death. Leovigild's hostility to Catholicism had been fierce; Reccared, without showing any hostility to Arianism, announced his own acceptance of the Catholic creed, and induced many of the nobles to follow his example. Like Theodoric in Italy, he made no distinction between Catholic and Arian, and in the course of a generation Arianism practically disappeared. His success was no doubt largely due to the good fortune which attended his arms whenever he had to resort to fighting.

But in removing one stumbling-block he had raised up another, all unconsciously. The grateful clergy were a useful counterpoise to the turbulent nobles.

When he consulted the national council much the larger part of it consisted not of the great Gothic nobles but of the bishops. With the bishops at his back the king's authority was greatly strengthened. But when a smaller man than Reccared was king, he soon became the tool of the bishops; and the age-long curse of Spain, the subservience of the crown to the churchmen, came into being. The Gothic monarchy became priest-ridden. The constitutional struggle became one between nobles and churchmen.

### Blood-stained Annals of the House of Clovis

**A** DIFFERENT course was followed in the Frank dominion set up by Clovis. There was no religious antagonism to accentuate racial antagonism, and there was a royal house to whose title the nobles were unswervingly loyal; though partition of the inheritance among the sons was the destructive custom of the Frankish race. Clovis at his death in 511 left his dominion so divided between four sons, while Burgundy lay between the active Frankish hammer and the solid anvil of Provence.

The annals of the house of the Merwings reek with blood from the outset. Clovis had killed off all the members of the royal house except his own sons, to clear the field for himself. By a strict adherence to their father's fundamental principle that treachery, audacity and ruthlessness are the basis of statecraft, the four brothers made themselves masters of all Gaul except the fragment which remained to the Visigoths; while the eldest, Theuderic, and after his death in 533 his son Theudebert, extended their supremacy over the German tribes beyond the Rhine. It was Theudebert who was responsible for the first of the two invasions of Italy which have already been recorded.

Chlothar (Lothaire), the youngest and worst of the brood, survived his brothers, took the surest means of surviving their offspring, and died sole king of the Franks in 561, fifty years after his father. Incidentally he had fired the house over the head of his own eldest and rebellious son, who perished in the flames with his wife and children. The kingdom was once again divided in four between Chlothar's

## East and West in Ferment

surviving sons. The eldest dying in 467, Guntram took the centre (Burgundy), Chilperic the north and west (Neustria), and Sigibert the Rhenish and trans-Rhenish territory (known as Austrasia).

A blazing quarrel broke out between Sigibert and Chilperic. Guntram managed to effect a brief reconciliation while the Franks made common cause against a new danger. The Langobards, to whom we shall return, had just entered the stage, poured into Italy, and were threatening Provence. In 573 the invaders were driven over the Alps, and the contest between the brothers was renewed.

They had married the Visigothic princesses Brunhild and Galswintha respectively. Then Chilperic murdered Galswintha and married his mistress Fredegonde. Brunhild was set on revenge. Guntram had succeeded in composing matters for the time by awarding 'blood-money' according to common German custom—some cities in Aquitaine; but Brunhild wanted blood. Chilperic and Sigibert each devastated the other's territories; Sigibert was winning when Chilperic or Fredegonde had him murdered. The Austrasian nobles crowned the infant heir Childebert. Brunhild had been taken, but her captor, Chilperic's son, fell in love with her and married instead of killing her. Fredegonde procured his murder, but Brunhild escaped to Austrasia. The Austrasian nobles held by the child, but would not submit to his mother, and the ceaseless strife between Brunhild and the nobles, during his minority, wrecked the power of the crown among the Austrasians.

Guntram too stood by Chilperic; war raged all over Gaul, Chilperic having the upper hand, while his evil queen Fredegonde indulged in innumerable crimes. But he was murdered when hunting. His infant heir Chlothar fell with Fredegonde into Guntram's hands (584) and the welter of blood was stayed for a time.

### Decline of the Merwing Dynasty

**I**N 593 Guntram, the one tolerably respectable Merwing, died; Childebert, son of Sigibert, succeeded to his dominions as well as Austrasia. The fighting started again. Childebert died leaving two infants

in charge of his untamable mother. For twelve years practically there had been no grown up king among the Franks; the nobles had been under no control; and from this time there was only one of the Merovingian kings of the Franks who can be said to have exercised regal authority.

There is no need to follow in detail the monotonous record of murder and fratricide. Fredegonde died in her bed; the indomitable Brunhild in her old age fell into the hands of Fredegonde's son Chlothar and was torn to death by wild horses. There was not a little of the tigress in her, but she had the makings of a great queen. Her great-grandchildren were murdered at the same time (614); the Austrasian nobles had deserted her; and once more Chlothar was sole king of the Franks.

### Mayors of the Frankish Palace

**B**UT their king was not their master. He was king because Austrasians and Burgundians had offered to acknowledge him on terms that limited the royal prerogatives and conceded to the nobles prerogatives which in effect transferred the supreme authority to their hands. The acting heads of their governments, the 'mayors of the palace,' were made irremovable. A generation later that office became hereditary. When the first noble in the state held the office for life and passed it on to his son, the minister was bound to dominate the sovereign. Thenceforward, too, the royal decrees were issued as having the approval of the king's counsellors, lay and ecclesiastical.

Apart from the savage revenge taken on Brunhild the reign of Chlothar (613-628) was not particularly sanguinary. In 623 he made his son Dagobert king of Austrasia—broadly speaking, Neustria was that portion of the Frankish dominion which had been under Roman government, Austrasia the non-Romanised German portion. Dagobert had the advantage of two very able and loyal counsellors, his mayor of the palace Pepin (the Old) of Hersthal, and Bishop Arnulf of Metz, the joint progenitors of the house of the Arnulfings, later known as the Karlings or Carolingians. Dagobert became sole

king of the Franks in 628, nominally transferred Austrasia to his son Sigibert in 632, and died in 638, the last of the Merovingians whose authority was more than a shadow. Both his great counsellors survived him. The Neustrian and Burgundian mayors of the palace had been of no particular distinction.

## First Advent of the Lombards

**I**N Italy Justinian obliterated the Ostrogoths and set up his exarch at Ravenna, but the East could spare neither the money from its empty exchequer, nor the men from its oriental population, nor the energy which had more than enough calls upon it elsewhere to rehabilitate the exhausted country, defend it from vigorous foes, or reorganize a supreme government. In 568, fifteen years after the Gothic wars, a new barbarian group was overrunning the peninsula.

The Langobards (long-axes?), or, to adopt at once the more familiar form of their name, the Lombards, were a backward division of those various tribes associated with the Gothic name. They had never come prominently into collision with the Empire; but about the close of the fifth century they had pushed their way to the middle Danube. Towards the middle of the sixth century they broke the domination of the Heruli and the Gepidae, in alliance with the Avars, a Mongolian race who had pushed into Hungary; they provided Narses with mercenary troops for his campaigns against the Ostrogoths; like Alaric and Theodoric, the attraction of Italy appealed to their king Alboin; and when the emperor Justin II dismissed Narses from the Italian exarchate in 567, they left their Danubian lands to their allies the Avars, and poured through the Alps to take the place vacated by the Ostrogoths.

Apart from the stubborn defence of a few fortified cities, notably Pavia, no resistance was offered to their conquest

and settlement in the much depopulated 'Lombard plain.' Alboin was the last of the Lethings, the family recognized as royal. When in 572 he was murdered by his wife—he had forced her to drink from a cup which was made of the skull of her father, the king of the Gepidae whom he had slain in battle after their marriage—the chiefs or dukes of the various clans regarded a new king as a superfluity, and for several years ranged over Italy, establishing themselves as dukes at their own convenience. From Ravenna, Perugia and Rome imperial officers ruled over considerable and almost contiguous territories; the 'foot' of

Italy could remain defiant; but otherwise almost the whole peninsula passed under Lombard dominion—the dominion of a variety of Lombard dukes who owned no central authority.

In the south the Lombards were few, and did not materially affect the character of the population or the traditional organization. In the north, where they were at least comparatively numerous, they made Lombardy something distinct from the rest of Italy. There, after a brief interval, they set up a new elective monarchy; with all the instability inci-

dental to the elective system.

They had arrived as pagans, but adopted Catholic (not Arian) Christianity under the influence of the Christian queen Theodelinda, who married successively the kings Authari (583-590) and Agilulf (590-615). The latter did a good deal towards consolidating the kingdom in the north, but did not otherwise extend it, though he called himself king of all Italy. There are no records of note regarding the reigns of his two immediate successors.

The other feature of the time is the papacy of Gregory I the Great (590-604), who made the pope not only the acknowledged spiritual head of western Christendom, but also in effect the temporal ruler of Rome, and may be said to have



**DAGOBERT THE FRANK**

Dagobert I (623-632) was the last Frankish king who was anything but a puppet. His mayor of the palace was Pepin the Old, who inaugurated the greatness of the Carolingian line.

*British Museum*



## East and West in Ferment

inaugurated that conception of the supreme authority of the Papacy which was to play so large a part in medieval history. His responsibility for a series of rather deplorable puns, and for sending the lesser Augustine to plant the Latin Church in England, have made his name familiar to British children.

### Saxon Settlement in Britain

**B**ITAIN had, so to speak, loosed her moorings to the Continent, while the English were already beginning to settle on her shores, before Odoacer deposed Romulus Augustulus. The Roman unity had broken up under pressure of raiding Picts and Scots—Irish clans who had established themselves in Argyll—on the north, Irish raiders on the west, Jutish and Saxon rovers on the south. Legend and historical fact are too inextricably mingled to be disentangled with any confidence, but in the course of a hundred years between the (reputed) landing of Aella in Sussex (477) and the victory of the West-Saxon Ceawlin at Deorham in the west country (577) successive groups of pagan Saxons or Angles conquered and established their domination in about half of so much of the island as lies south of the Forth; and when Aethelfrith, of Northumbria, won the battle of Chester in 613 the half had become two-thirds or three-quarters. How far the Britons were exterminated, enslaved, or amalgamated with the conquerors, is vehemently disputed. Everything east of a line drawn roughly from Edinburgh through Gloucester to the Channel was under English domination, all to the west of it was Celtic; but those two battles, Deorham and Chester, severed the Britons of Wales from the south and north Britons respectively, carrying the Saxons in the south and the Angles in the north to the west coast, which they had not reached before.

The Britons were broken up into chiefdoms or principalities, with Celtic institutions modified by four centuries of Roman supremacy; and they retained their Christianity. The Celts beyond the old Roman frontier in the north were being Christianised during the second half

of the sixth century—the five-hundreds—by the missionary zeal of S. Columba and his Irish followers, since Ireland had been independently Christianised (the Romans never having gone there) more than a century earlier.

In the last quarter, then, of the sixth century all the English were pagans, and there is no trace of Christianity surviving in the conquered districts. We can distinguish certain kingdoms: most definitely the Jute kingdom of Kent, the earliest settled conquest; the Saxon kingdom of Wessex; the Angle kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia; less definitely, of the East Angles and East Saxons, and of South Saxons wedged between Kent and the West Saxons; and in the midlands the Middle Angles established in Mercia, on the March of the Welsh Britons, contiguous in the south with the West Saxon kingdom of Hwicce; British kingdoms survived in Elmet, Cornwall and Cumbria (see map in page 2410)

### Augustine's Introduction of Christianity

**K**ENT, for obvious reasons, was the gateway to the Continent, and was naturally the part of the island most open to European influence. The marriage of Ethelbert of Kent to the Merovingian princess Bertha no doubt encouraged Pope Gregory to carry out his long-projected design of sending a mission to England. Augustine and his company were favourably received (597); with the result that before sixty years had passed Christianity was the established religion over the whole island, though the antagonisms between the 'Latin' practices adopted by the English and the 'Celtic' practices which continued to hold their own in the rest of the island and in Ireland effectually counteracted what might have been expected to prove a unifying influence.

As yet there was political unity neither in the English nor in the Celtic regions. There was no king of the English and no king of the Britons. Unification could be accomplished only by force of arms. The foundations of Northumbrian ascendancy were laid by Edwin of Northumbria (617–633); but that



Christian monarch was slain in battle by the last champion of paganism, Penda of Mercia. But neither the Northumbrian nor the Mercian power was destined to effect the unification of England.

**W**E have traced the dissolution of what had been the united Roman Empire in the West, and the preservation of its unity in the East down to the death of Justinian; we have followed the fortunes of the West for nearly seventy years more. We have now to revert to the East, its continued struggle against disintegrating forces, and the unsuspected prelude to the Great Eruption.

The last years of Justinian had been inglorious. Save that Athanagild had enabled him to recover a temporary footing in Spain, there was no extension of the imperial authority, nor was its grip upon what had already been won effective. Exhaustion had set in, and the emperor himself in his old age was obsessed by the idea that he was a great theologian. Absorbed in theological controversy, he neglected the problems of state.

His successor, Justin II (565-578), was ambitious, but lacked both the capacity and the means to achieve his imperial ambitions. By this time the Slavs or Slovenians were rather flooding than infiltrating the Balkan peninsula in an inexhaustible stream. The Avars in conjunction with the Lombards had just obliterated their trans-Danubian enemies, the Herulians and Gepidae, and, when the Lombards departed to take possession of Italy, were ready to expand southward. The financial and military resources of the Empire were reduced to a very low ebb.

Justinian had kept the Avars quiet by a subsidy. Justin invited their attack by withdrawing the subsidy, and they

responded by raiding with ever increasing intensity. Then in 571 he refused to continue the payments to the Persians, under the agreement which had been made when they evacuated Colchis. Thus began a prolonged Persian war (572-591), which was a steady drain on the resources of the Empire, bringing no counterbalancing gains; though, on the whole, the Persians had the worse in the fighting. Then Justin went mad, recovered sufficiently to nominate Tiberius Constantius as his colleague—the wisest act of his life—and relapsed again. For a time the power remained in the hands of his own empress. On his death, Tiberius II, of whom much was expected, became really emperor; but with the best intentions could accomplish nothing, save an untrustworthy agreement with the Avars, before his premature death in 582.

Tiberius nominated as his successor Maurice I (582-602), who had been doing good service in command of the eastern army. He was a good soldier, but custom forbade the emperor to command the armies in the field, and he did not understand army administration. The one truth he realized was the need for economy, and his economies ruined the discipline of the forces. Still, the war was ended by a Persian revolution. The king Hormisdas was killed and the crown was usurped by Varahnes. The legitimate heir Chosroes fled to the Romans; Maurice gave him help which enabled him to carry out a counter-revolution and recover the throne. In such circumstances it was not difficult to negotiate a peace much needed by both sides, on the basis of a return to the pre-war conditions.

Meanwhile the Avars had broken the peace which Tiberius had induced



**THE TYRANT PHOCAS**

Phocas, who had deposed and slain Maurice in 602, met a like fate eight years later at the hands of Heraclius. It is thought that this bronze steel-yard weight preserves his lineaments.

*British Museum*

## East and West in Ferment

them to accept. Also the Slavonic flood was rising. In 599 the economical emperor refused to ransom some thousands of prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the Avars; whereon the khan of the Avars had them massacred. Public opinion laid the blame on Maurice. Then in 601, again for the sake of economy, the troops at the front were ordered not to return to winter quarters. The soldiers mutinied, chose Phocas, one of their own number, as their leader, marched on Constantinople, murdered Maurice, and proclaimed Phocas emperor (602).

Chaos followed, for Phocas was nothing but a brutal savage. Chosroes, as the avenger of his old protector Maurice, set about the conquest of the East, while Avars and Slavs ranged practically unresisted over the Balkan peninsula, and Phocas occupied himself in hunting out conspiracies and killing conspirators real or only suspected. Year by year the Persian raiding columns carried their incursions farther and farther west over Mesopotamia, northern Syria, eastern, central and at last even western Asia Minor; only south Syria, Africa and Egypt were immune.

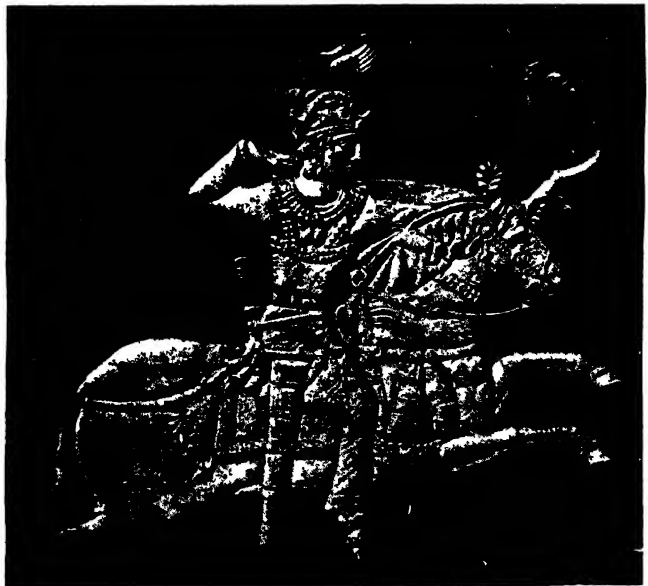
In 609 Heraclius the elder, who had governed Africa long and well, organized revolt. In 610 his son, Heraclius the younger, arrived at the Dardanelles with a fleet. The tyrant found himself utterly deserted. He was seized and handed over in chains to young Heraclius, who forthwith sent him to the death he merited. Then Constantinople proclaimed the deliverer emperor.

The task before him was incredibly difficult. Experienced officers, disciplined troops, money above all, were wanting. Disaster followed disaster. The Persians turned on Syria; in 514 the pagan host captured Jerusalem, sacked it, and carried off what had been for centuries treasured as the True Cross on which the Saviour had been crucified. Two years later they

invaded Egypt, which offered no resistance at all. In 617 they took and garrisoned Chalcedon, facing Constantinople across the Bosphorus. The end seemed at hand.

Despair wrought almost a miracle. High and low rallied to the cause; the Church leading, they brought in by voluntary effort all their treasures, and troops were raised. Heraclius proclaimed his resolve to break through tradition and take the field in person—to stake all on the last desperate effort to save the Empire and Christianity. But first the Avars and Slavs had to be bound over. It was not till 622 that Heraclius was at last free to launch his attack.

He had one vital asset, the command of the sea, and he used it. While he had it, Constantinople was safe, and he used it to fling his whole force on the Persian centre in Cilicia, cleaving Asia Minor from Syria, and compelling the Persians to withdraw from the West. Next year he drove straight at Media. Year after year success followed success. He penetrated victoriously farther into the heart of Persia than any Roman commander before him.



**CHOSROES THE CONQUERING PERSIAN**

This Persian figure in relief, taken from a splendid silver cup, is probably that of Chosroes II, Parviz (591-628). Nominally to avenge the death of his ally Maurice, he invaded the Empire, and had possessed himself of Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine and Egypt when Heraclius turned the tables on him.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris : photo, Girzudon*

## Chronicle XIV. 476-632

When the Avars broke treaty again, he dared to risk leaving the capital to the strength of its own defences, and the siege was broken up in 626. In 627 he shattered the last of the Persian armies near Nineveh. The Nemesis of overweening success at last overtook Chosroes; the very army deposed him, and his successor was prompt to sue for peace, which Heraclius was willing enough to grant on generous terms. The Persian threat to the Empire was finally nullified. The idol of the army and the people, Heraclius returned in 628 to Constantinople, unconscious of the rise, in remote Arabia, of a menace far more terrific than that which he had so gloriously broken—the world-shaking menace of Islam. For the Prophet had arisen on whose death four years later the flood-gates would be opened. His career is dealt with in Chapter 89.

### World Events in the Distant East

**W**HE left China parted between the Wei dynasty of the north and the Sung in the south. The Ch'i displaced the Sung in 479, to be succeeded by the Liang in 502, and the Ch'ên in 557. About the last date the Wei separated the eastern and western provinces of its dominions; and then in 581 a successful usurper, Yang Chien of Sui, made himself emperor of both north and south. The Sui dynasty was short-lived. In 618 it was displaced by Li Yüan, the founder of the T'ang dynasty, whose rule is counted as another Golden Age, when Chinese literature was at its zenith. Li Yüan was given the name of Kao Tsu; his son and successor Tai Tsung (627-649) was, like his father, a patron of art and literature, but also a law-giver and a conqueror, who extended the empire to the Caspian Sea and encouraged intercourse with foreign powers. His reign, however, had barely begun at the point where our chronicle closes.

Towards the close of the fifth century, the last of the great Guptas beat back the invasion of India by the White Huns. Skandagupta's successors were less successful; though the dynasty was not

destroyed the empire was broken up. During the sixth century the invaders, who were akin to the Turks rather than the Mongols proper, established themselves all over northern India, their chiefs forming a new nobility, which preferred to associate itself with the old governing class rather than to destroy it. Hence there is at least plausible ground for the view that the later Rajputs whom Hindu law identifies with the old Kshatriya caste are in fact much more White Hun than genuine Hindu. Throughout the century, however, the records are meagre.

### Chinese Descriptions of India

**B**UT in the first half of the seventh century there is more light. In 606 the young prince Harsha-vardhana succeeded to the throne of a rising kingdom on the Jumna, and in the course of forty years developed it into an empire which covered the whole of northern India, except the Punjab, between the Himalayas and the Narbada. Very full description of that great kingdom was recorded by a Chinese traveller (as usual), Yuan Chwang, a Buddhist pilgrim. Kanauj on the Ganges, due east of Agra, was Harsha's capital; and his tributaries included the kings of Gujarat in the west and Assam in the east. Both Brahmanism as represented by countless temples and Buddhism by many monasteries flourished exceedingly under the monarch, who was Brahman by birth but Buddhist by inclination. After the not very prolonged wars which established his empire in 612, Harsha would seem to have tried to emulate Asoka rather than Chandragupta; justice and humanity pervaded the administration, though less completely than in the days of the great Buddhist emperor. The king himself not only patronised, but practised literature with some distinction; he was the Indian counterpart of his Chinese contemporaries Kao Tsu and Tai Tsung.

With the departure of Yuan Chwang a few years before Harsha's death, obscurity again descends upon the Indian records.

# MONASTICISM: ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS

Sketch of the Social and Intellectual Part played  
in World History by the Monastic Institution

By G. G. COULTON D.Litt.

Fellow of S. John's College, Cambridge; Author of *Mediaeval Studies*, *From S. Francis to Dante*, *Five Centuries of Religion*, etc.

**M**ONASTICISM is a very ancient institution, possibly even prehistoric. There has always been a small minority of men and women who find in seclusion and contemplation the conditions best suited to their nature. In the Orient the system early found adherents, and it became firmly established throughout the East in association with the Buddhist religion. The present chapter, however, deals mainly with Christian monasticism.

Christianity was not a religion of accommodation to ordinary social usages and conventions; but, as the early Christians gradually ceased to contemplate the second advent of Christ as immediately imminent, it became necessary for them to choose between the rigid otherworldliness of the first converts and a more supple compliance natural to men who no longer expected the immediate destruction of the present world. Definite lines of cleavage soon grew up between the stricter and the laxer minds; and in Egypt, where the contrast was strongest, we soon find germs of a monastic system.

Alexandria was one of the greatest cities of the Roman Empire; one of the busiest centres of commerce and science and literature and art. Alexandria, not Rome, was, after Jerusalem, the centre of Christian thought for many generations. But it had all the vices of a great city; and close by were deserts with spots of oasis admirably suited for retirement. Thither Anthony and Paul, the first recorded Christian hermits, retired about A.D. 250. Their example attracted numerous imitators; and these increased when Constantine, by raising Christianity

to the position of a state religion for the whole Roman Empire, gave it a vast increase of political strength, but rendered the problem of otherworldliness proportionately more acute.

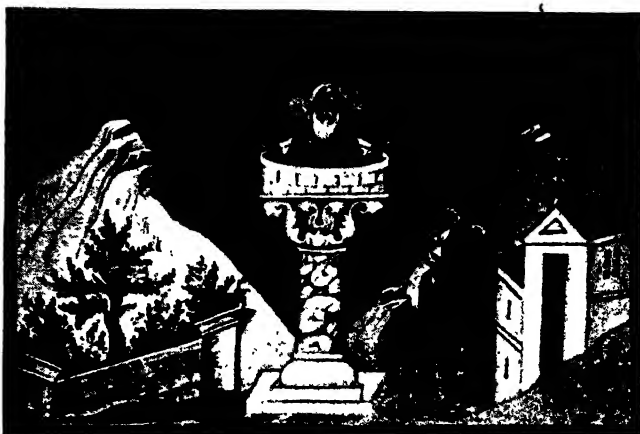
The rapid extension of hermit life rendered centralisation imperative, since it is not possible for multitudes to live in pure individualism; and in S. Jerome's time (d. 420) we find monks already organized in communities. As early as about 315 Pachomius had drawn up a rule for such organized life; half a century later S. Basil drew up a rule upon which Eastern monasticism is to a great extent based even to the present day. Palladius, whose *Lausiack History* was written in about 420, tells us that he found five thousand monks in the desert of Nitria, with no more than eight priests among them, of whom only one ordinarily celebrated the Eucharist. From this history, and from other similar contemporary and sub-contemporary collections, the modern reader can form the best idea of early Eastern monasticism both in its historical and in its legendary aspect. All this mass of tradition was formed into a volume which, in the Latin West, became classical under the name of *Vitaspatrum*. The Eastern version is accessible in an English translation by Sir Ernest Wallis Budge, *The Paradise of the Fathers*, a book that is indispensable for the study of early monastic life. But Eastern monasticism enters far less than Western into political and social history.

For, meanwhile, the monastic movement had begun to spread westwards. There were a certain number of early Celtic

**Earliest rules  
for Monastic life**

monasteries (see Chap. 103), curiously bound up with the tribal system. Monasteries can be traced in Italy and France in about A.D. 360; early in the sixth century we find three Western Rules, composed by Caesarius of Arles, by Cassiodorus and by S. Benedict. The last of these was by far the most efficient; and it soon became virtually the one standard rule for Western monks.

S. Benedict was well born, and studied first at Rome; but the wickedness of that city repelled him. His biographer, S. Gregory, writes: 'He despised the literary studies [of that city] and departed, knowingly ignorant and wisely unlearned.' First he took refuge in a cave, and lived so wild a life that shepherds took him for a strange beast. A neighbouring monastery at last chose this remarkable ascetic for abbot; but he soon left them with the parting words: 'Choose ye some other abbot suitable to your own conditions.' Disciples flocked again to his cave; he formed these into small groups, each



#### RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM RUN MAD

Fanaticism was carried to almost incredible extremes by some of the anchorites, notably by those who established themselves upon pillars ('styloi') and lived aloof from their kind. A miniature in the martyrology of the emperor Basil II thus illustrates the self-imposed discipline of S. Daniel the Stylite.

*From Renouveau of Basil II., Vatican Codex*

of twelve monks with an abbot: numbers which afterwards became consecrated not only in the Benedictine but in other orders. A community which consisted of at least thirteen was technically called 'conventual.' This new ascetic's success brought him corresponding persecution from laxer clergy; but in the end he triumphed, and his monastery of Montecassino, on a hill between Rome and Naples, became in a sense the monastic capital of the West.

S. Benedict's rule is a masterpiece of force and discretion combined. Those who accept it must do so in all seriousness, with full soldierly devotion; the rule is 'the law under which you have chosen to fight.' Once accepted, it must not be questioned, nor must the abbot's authority; the abbot stands in Christ's place, both as captain and in charitable consideration for his disciples. And this emphasis on obedience is justified by the studied moderation of the rule itself. It was no part of S. Benedict's scheme to found an order of priests and scholars; indeed, he probably did not



#### HERMITAGE OF A COPTIC MONK

This hermitage was discovered in a cliff near Abydos in 1922. It comprised an oratory and a living room containing a sleeping bench, a rock-hewn basin and a cooking stove of limestone blocks. Outside the door was a niche for a lamp, and door and window were surrounded with crosses and inscriptions.

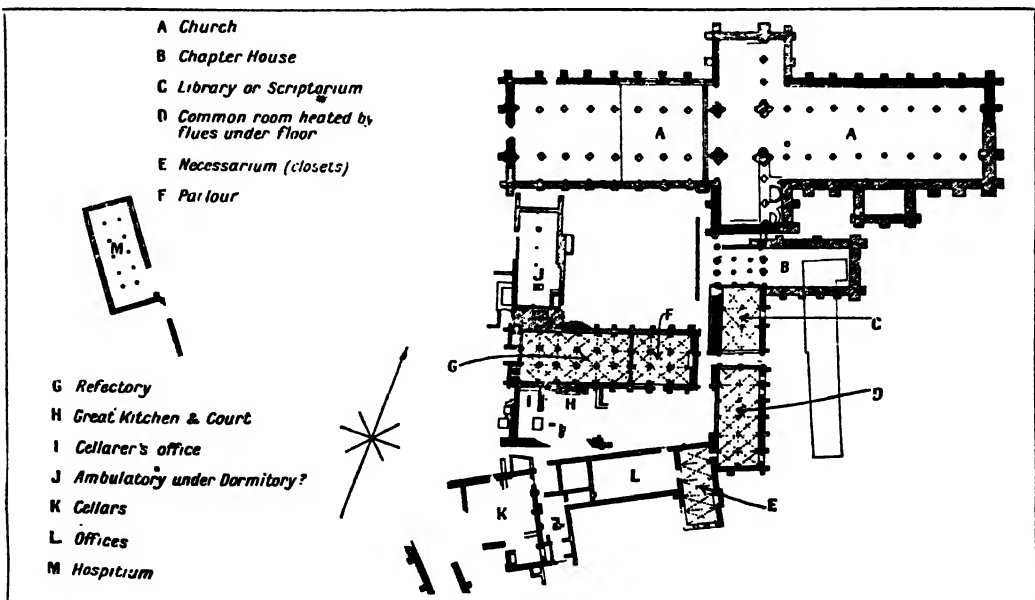
*Courtesy of Lady Flinders Petrie*

foresee an order at all in the full sense. He prescribed simply for himself and his own small community, but on the basis of such ripe experience, with such sane judgement and true human sympathy, that his work stood the test of many centuries, and much of it still survives among all the changes imposed by modern conditions. •

S. Benedict conceived the abbey as a self-sufficing community. The buildings were to be so arranged as to include all necessary offices and stores; the sixty-sixth chapter of his rule prescribes that, in normal circumstances, no monk should ever leave the precincts; and early commentators interpreted this with the strictest severity. Within those precincts the monk was to live much like a peasant-farmer in S. Benedict's own Italy; the same rough country frock and hood thrown over a woollen tunic; a sparing use of wine (teetotalism was almost unknown to the Middle Ages); no butcher's meat except in cases of sickness; steady occupation during the day and moderate sleep at night.

His occupations, of course, differed from the farmer's. His work was, indeed, to be partly manual, in field or garden or kitchen, but partly intellectual also; S. Benedict contemplates about three hours' reading a day, unless the monk be illiterate. Partly, again, it was to consist in common prayer—pre-eminently 'opus Dei': some four hours of this, apart from such private prayer or meditation as the individual might prescribe for himself. Masses, originally, were said only on Sundays and the greater holy days; therefore the early Benedictines, like the monks of the Eastern deserts, had only a very small proportion of priests.

In other respects also the good monk's life was harder than the farmer's, for his rule prescribed taciturnity; not necessarily complete silence, though strict reformers often interpreted it so, but at least an avoidance of general conversation, whether at work or elsewhere. The 'parlatorium,' or talking-room for certain times of day, was a later monastic development at a period when, in spite of this prescribed 'taciturnitas,' monks often



GROUND PLAN OF S. MARY'S ABBEY AT YORK

All monasteries were built upon the same general lines. The church was the nucleus of the whole institution and (usually on the south side of it) were the cloisters with the buildings appropriated to the daily life of the community ranged round their other three sides, the dormitories being on the upper storey. Kitchen and offices lay beyond the cloisters, communicating with the refectory. At the Benedictine Abbey of S. Mary's, York, the hospitium, or guest house, was a detached building.

After Churton, 'Monastic Remains.'



THE PRIOR OF ST. ALBAN'S

The prior was the second superior of a monastery, subordinate to the abbot, by whom he was appointed, and charged with the government of the community, the discipline of the house and the maintenance of observance of the rule.

*British Museum, MS. Nero D. vii*

followed the impulse of human nature, and had become busy collectors and transmitters of the current news. But S. Benedict certainly took what we should call a precisian's view of talk and jest. His sixth chapter forbids not only all 'words moving to laughter,' but 'idle words'; that is, whatever does not definitely tend to edification.

Lastly, S. Benedict's ideal prescribed three great steps in self-denial beyond the average good man—Obedience, Poverty and Chastity. These were spoken of through the Middle Ages as the Three Substantials, without which there could be no true monasticism. From the two last it was agreed that the pope himself had no power to absolve, unless (as some maintained) he could pass a sponge over all the vows and commitments, and turn the man altogether from a monk into a non-monk again. Poverty, from the personal point of view, must be absolute; a monk committed grievous sin if he

claimed private ownership of even a pen or any such trifle. But collectively the monks might be, and soon were, very richly endowed; the theory, to the last, was that they held this wealth mainly in trust for others. Great churchmen of the most unquestioned orthodoxy, however, were ready to point out that this had naturally become a legal fiction; that the monks had, in fact, the full disposal of nearly all their revenues, and that their claim to poverty must to this extent be modified. Indeed, this matter of endowment, with its accompanying wealth of legal privileges, forms in one sense the central and most significant factor in monastic history. From the earliest times these two elements, religious poverty and material power, proved on the one hand almost as inseparable from each other, and on the other hand almost as irreconcilable with each other, as S. Augustine shows Church and State to be in his City of God.

This righteous institution soon earned, as it deserved, wealth and power. Already in S. Benedict's time nobles brought their sons to be put under his care, as prospective monks; again, the fiftieth chapter of the rule prescribes that whatever property a postulant possesses should, at his profession, be given either to the poor or to the funds of the monastery. In this way, and especially through deathbed legacies for the benefit of the monastery, the accumulation of wealth and privileges fit of men's souls, the

monasteries soon amassed considerable revenues, which grew sometimes to enormous proportions. Privileges accrued at an equal rate; monastic property and persons were held as exceptionally sacred; the earlier foundation deeds often conclude with a recital of solemn and ghastly curses upon violators of these possessions or immunities. Therefore monasteries soon became rich and numerous out of all proportion to those who had a real vocation for the 'religious' life.

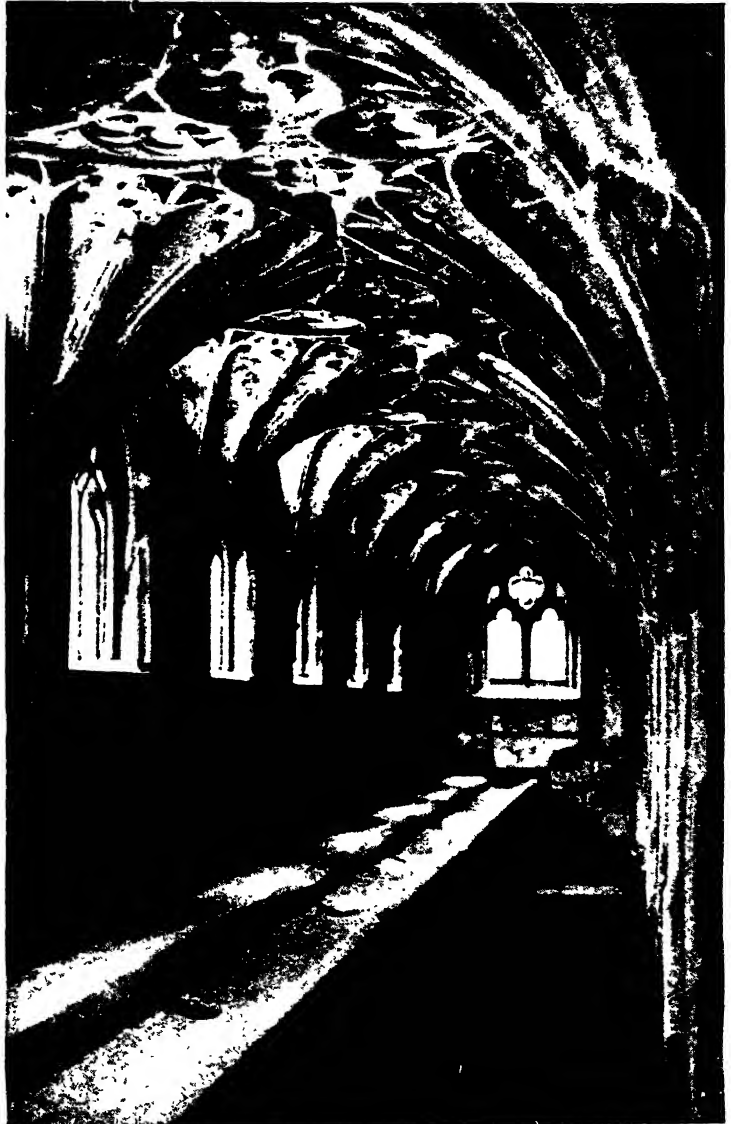
The Dark Ages, with their alternations of barbarian invasions and desperate efforts for reconstruction, were naturally difficult for monasticism; zeal cooled; the temptations to malversation of property were very great; and the institution

gradually lost much of its original religious and charitable character. When Charles Martel (d. 741) confiscated many monastic endowments to finance his military reforms, it is probable that society in general really gained by the transfer. Bede (d. 735) speaks very plainly of monastic decay in England; and the decrees of Charles the Great and of his successors throughout the ninth century tell the same tale. There were occasional vigorous efforts for reform, led by men like S. Benedict of Aniane in Charles's empire, and by S. Dunstan in England; much was done here and there by Anglo-Saxon and Celtic missionaries. But at the end of the Dark Ages—about the year A.D. 1000—monasticism in general was certainly much decayed from its original purity.

With the general revival of civilization came a monastic revival, led by the house of Cluny in Burgundy. Founded in 910, this reformed abbey soon gained enough influence to form the first congregation of primary importance in Western monastic history. Before 1100 it had two hundred dependent monasteries, and in 1500 these numbered more than eight hundred. Some of these, though styled simple priories, rivalled the greatest abbeys in Europe. Cluny itself possessed the greatest church in the West, and its abbot was the most powerful ecclesiastic next to the pope. He was father-abbot of all his congregation, with power to depose or to create; representatives from the two hundred

priories met yearly at Cluny in a general chapter; and a system of yearly visitations made reports on the internal state of each house.

As a natural corollary, the whole congregation was soon made 'exempt,' that is, independent of the diocesan bishops and answerable to the pope alone. Only



**LAVATORIUM IN THE CLOISTERS AT GLOUCESTER**

On the north, west and east sides of a monastery's cloisters, in which the daily life of the community was mostly passed, were wainscotted recesses fitted with desks where the monks studied and wrote. On the south side, as being sunless and cold, the refectory was usually placed, with the lavatorium—often, as at Gloucester, no more than a long trough—close at hand for the monks' ablutions.

*Photo B. C. Clayton*





#### VIGIL OVER THE DEAD

When a monk died, his body was carried into the church through the great door and laid before the altar. There it remained, watched and prayed over by the community, until the moment came for its interment.

*British Museum, Egerton MSS. 1070*

a certain number of great abbeys had enjoyed this privilege hitherto ; Cluny was the first exempt congregation. It contributed much not only to a revival of regular discipline, but also to literature and art. But by the end of the eleventh century the congregation was decaying from

within ; moreover, society was improving, and the monk was expected to progress with the world. Between 1020 and 1120 no fewer than eight reformed congregations were born, ending with Carthusians (1084), Cistercians (1098) and Premonstratensians (1120).

The Cistercians were the most important. They aimed at bringing monasticism back to the literal Rule of S. Benedict, which was much mitigated even at Cluny ; and though, like all reformers who have to contend with ingrained and chronic relaxations, they fell into certain exaggerations, yet they were right in the main. Their greatest leader in fact, though not officially, was S. Bernard (d. 1154), in whom the most brilliant worldly gifts were united with a consuming religious enthusiasm.

This period is the apogee of medieval monasticism. For two centuries wealth and worldly honour had flowed in upon the monks more freely than at any time since the earliest days ; and, on the whole, they deserved it. True, the Benedictine rule of seclusion was very commonly neglected ; but it was often neglected to admirable purpose. This remains true even when we have cleared away the unreasonable exaggerations contained (for instance) in the oft-quoted sentence of Thorold Rogers : ' The monks were the men of letters in the Middle Ages, the historians, the jurists, the philosophers, the physicians, the students of nature.'



#### DISTINCTIVE HABITS OF THE MONASTIC ORDERS IN ENGLAND

Authentic information as to the uniform of the several monastic orders is furnished by a leaf of an illuminated psalter of the fourteenth century in the possession of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Along the bottom of the page the strip, reproduced here, shows, from left to right, two Cistercians in white, two Dominicans in black over white, two (probably) Premonstratensians in white, two Austin Friars, two Franciscans in brown, two Carmelites in white over black, and two Benedictines.

*Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, MS. A. 76*

Even in respect of literature and history this emphatic use of 'the' is not justified by facts; the monks do not so far excel the secular clergy, especially when we consider their opportunities.

In philosophy the claim is more nearly justified; yet even here perhaps the three most original thinkers of the period were not monks—Johannes Scotus Erigena, Abélard and Marsilius of Padua. But their contributions to law or physic were only fractional; indeed, two papal decrees

rendered it practically impossible for monks to become professional students of law or

medicine. The reason was two-fold: such study would interfere with their religious work, and it would tempt the lawyer or doctor monk to take fees and amass private property, thus violating one of the Three Substantials of his vow. In natural science, that which was done in the cloister cannot really be compared with what was done outside; the most remarkable exceptions here are Roger Bacon (whom his fellow-friars imprisoned) and a few other Oxford friars of the early generation, who took their impulse from a greater man than themselves, Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln.

In art, again, the legend that the monk took a preponderant part (except as wealthy patron) depends partly on misreading, partly on neglect, of the actual records; especially upon unwarrantable generalisations from a few concrete cases which (as the documents themselves often imply) were exceptional. It must be borne in mind that there were eight thousand cloisterers in England alone at the Dissolution, and probably about twelve thousand in 1250; the actual indications are that monastic artists bore scarcely greater numerical proportion to the whole than water-colour artists do among the Anglican clergy of our own day.

Monastic services to education are often equally exaggerated. Frequently, in earlier days, the best divinity schools were monastic. The monks under early missionary conditions sometimes conducted a small school for outsiders, apart from their own novices. Later, a great monastery often possessed a small almonry

school, and a still smaller choir school; and a few nuns, in spite of prohibition or discouragement from their ecclesiastical superiors, eked out their scanty incomes by teaching a few children, as they also did by taking grown boarders. But the monasteries were not directly concerned with the foundation of any university; the monks who taught at universities were an almost negligible fraction; even the papal attempt, from the year 1336 onwards, to compel a certain proportion to study at a university proved, at best, a half-success.

Lastly, we must make corresponding deductions from the frequent assertion that monasteries were great copying shops for books. There is sufficient evidence to treat this subject statistically, within certain limits; monastic catalogues of different centuries sometimes enable us to calculate the rate of increase within a given period. The rate is never greater than would be accounted for by the labours of one monk out of fifty, working steadily for only half the day at the rate of a professional scribe. Moreover, this rests upon the assumption that the new books were all written by monks, whereas in



AT WORK IN THE SCRIPTORIUM

While the service of monasteries in the multiplication of books has been exaggerated, the great houses had 'scriptoria,' where monks or hired professional scribes, one of whom is portrayed here, were provided with materials for copying books.

*British Museum, Harleian MSS. 4425*



#### • A CARMELITE IN HIS STUDY

The Order of Carmelite Friars was founded on Mount Carmel in the twelfth century and spread over Europe in the thirteenth. From the white mantle worn over their black habit they became popularly known as the White Friars.

*British Museum, Royal MS. 14 E 1*

many cases we know them to have been given to the monastery, or bought, or written by hired scribes within the precincts. At very great monasteries like S. Alban's and Corvey, which had specially famous 'scriptoria,' the evidence tends to show that hired scribes were a regular institution before 1300.

But, with all these deductions, it may be said that monasticism was among the greatest, if not the very greatest, of civilizing forces in the Middle Ages. The monasteries formed the main channel of transmission for ancient Roman civilization. When the Goth Theodoric conquered Italy, he took the Roman Cassiodorus as one of his ministers. This man, after thirty years of statecraft, retired to his native Squillace in Calabria, where he founded a monastery, endowed it with books and drew up a plan of study. It has been suggested with great probability that the best texts of the Vulgate now extant derive from this library of Cassiodorus. Other monasteries naturally collected some store of books, smaller or greater; and a certain proportion of these, either in original or in copy, drifted down safely even through barbarian invasions, Norman piracies, the ravage of

national or civil wars, domestic neglect and waste and mismanagement, and (even more fatal then, perhaps, than now) changes of fashion.

The friar Salimbene, writing at the end of the thirteenth century, tells us how the scraping of old manuscripts was practised in one monastery as a regular craft. Men scraped the old in order to write something new; and many of the best and oldest texts have been rediscovered, in modern times, under these later writings. For total neglect, we have, with much other evidence, the complaints of Bishop Richard de Bury in his *Love of Books*, and the state in which Boccaccio, about the same time, found the library of S. Benedict's own Montecassino. But the fact remains that such books as lived through the Dark Ages do, in most cases, owe their survival to the monasteries; and this is partly true even of the later Middle Ages.

In agriculture, again, they accepted and transmitted the Roman tradition of great landlordism. During the Dark Ages their estates resisted the forces of disorder better than the ordinary lay estate. They were more systematically managed and with a better system of accounts; and if, in the later Middle Ages, we often find the monk outdone by the layman, this was partly because princes and nobles were then exploiting ideas which they had learned from the earlier monasteries. In the minor details of agriculture the peasant would doubtless have kept most of the Roman traditions in any case; such things are ordinarily handed down from father to son, and the invasions would not have untaught them, except where the tillers were altogether exterminated. But the monks probably contributed a good deal by preserving, if only here and there, the old Roman writers on agriculture; and there is no reason to doubt the traditions that certain varieties of pear, apple, etc., were popularised by the exchange of grafts between monastery and monastery.

Again, the monks' charity was very great at its best, and seldom inconsiderable even at the worst. True, most of this was statutory: that is to say, the money was left by benefactors who definitely

ear-marked it for the poor, and the monks were therefore permitted to deduct it from that statement of their income which was required in 1535 for the purposes of taxation, the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. It is true, again, that these statutory distributions were not always fully carried out; not only do contemporaries complain, but sometimes the monks' own account-rolls, preserved by chance, show, that a considerable proportion was being embezzled. But enough still remained to give reality to the contention that the Dissolution did much to aggravate the agricultural crisis of the sixteenth century.

And, when we face the worst facts, at the least favourable times and places, we must still recognize that the average monk lived a distinctly less irregular life than the average layman. If it were possible to measure him thus, without reference to his lofty profession, his rich endowments and his great social and political privileges, this fact would disarm criticism. But we cannot stop short at that point; it is our duty to consider not only what he was, but what it was rightly expected that he should be. Orthodox and unorthodox students are now coming nearer to an agreement on those gradual steps in decay which alone can explain the catastrophe of the sixteenth century.

The first has already been noted. Wealth began to choke religion; this was remarked almost as plainly by the orthodox of the twelfth century as by any Albigenian or Wycliffite.

**Insidious onset of degeneracy** A learned modern Benedictine, Dom. Ursmer Berlière, has done more than anybody else to expose what was defective in The Recruitment of Benedictine Monasteries in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. Even to those days we may, with some truth, apply the epigram current in Germany during the last years of the Middle Ages: 'The monasteries are the almshouses of the nobility,' a refuge for dowerless younger sons and daughters. There were comfortable places far outnumbering the probability of real natural vocations; and, too often, even the serious minority were either tempted into conformity with the relaxed, or were persecuted and reduced to impotence.

In the fifteenth century we find a reforming abbot of Vienna asking a friendly bishop how far abbots are, morally bound by their official oath to maintain the actual rule. If this oath is to be taken literally, 'what abbot can come to heaven, since there are many things therein which are kept neither by the superiors nor by their subjects?' Indeed, the General Chapter Statutes themselves bear witness to this; many of the

most important pre-**Gradual relaxation of discipline**scriptions of the rule

were explicitly and officially abandoned. Butcher's meat, strictly prohibited by the founder, was so commonly eaten that Benedict XII legalised its use on alternate days in 1337. The emphatic rule of claustration was so relaxed that it came to be enforced only as an exceptional punishment: the monk who says 'thou liest' to his brother is not to be allowed outside the precincts for three weeks; to strike deliberately with fist or knife earns a year of claustration. Debts increased, mainly through waste and mismanagement, though plague and war were often heavy contributory causes. Reduction of income was met by reducing the number of monks or nuns. Masses and choir services were neglected; in 1437 the episcopal visitors found that, of the thirty-six monks who should be in choir at Peterborough, only ten or twelve attended; and the proportions were similar at Ramsey: 'so that secular folk, seeing this, speak ill of us.'

Thus alone can the Dissolution in England be fully explained; the monks, as a whole, had long ceased to be really popular. Even their inward deterioration since 1200 was less significant than their increasingly disadvantageous comparison with general society. Education was growing, commerce expanding, ideas widening; and all this while the monasteries were not even marking time. They were found wanting by a generation whose forefathers they themselves had done much to educate, indirectly if not directly. The consensus of criticism from the most orthodox and distinguished churchmen, during the last three centuries before the Reformation, is overwhelming. Bishop Pecock (d. circa 1460) could plead truly



OPEN AIR SERMON BY A MENDICANT FRIAR

Dominicans were specifically the preaching order of friars, but missionary work in the world was the purpose of all the mendicant orders, and they were in great demand as preachers. They might not, however, encroach upon the privileges of the clergy, nor preach without their leave in the parish churches.

*Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge MS. 22*

against the Lollards that, man for man, the monk compared favourably with the worldling ; but society needed more than this ; it needed a body of men who could more nearly justify their enormous wealth and privileges. And many lay folk, as well as clergy, knew something of the energetic efforts which had been made for reform, and how little had resulted.

The first pope who had seriously set himself to monastic reform was Innocent III. At the fourth Lateran Council (1215) he insisted that the General Chapter and Visitatorial System, so successfully adopted by a few reformed congregations, should now be extended to all Benedictines ; this decree had considerable effect on the Augustinians (Austin Canons) also.

Meanwhile there came (and, like all the greatest monastic reforms, from below) an impulse even more important than the earlier Carthusian-Cistercian-Premonstratensian movement. Monasticism, in virtue of its enormous endowments, was entangled in feudalism and capitalism (the rudimentary capitalism of that early age). S. Francis (d. 1226) conceived the idea of a new religious-social reform which was essentially inimical to capitalism. His aim was to 'follow, naked, the naked Christ' even more literally than the monk had used those words. The monks, individually poor if they kept the rule strictly,

were yet collectively rich ; the Brothers Minor (as S. Francis called his disciples) were to possess neither individually nor collectively ; their very houses were not to be their own. His immediate success was one of the wonders of all history ; he may be reasonably claimed as the most Christ-like figure since Christ ; yet this frontal attack upon wealth failed in the long run.

His contemporary S. Dominic (d. 1221), starting from a somewhat different standpoint, arrived at much the same result. Franciscans and Dominicans were at first close allies ; the Franciscans learned from their friendly rivals to

lay more stress upon study and preaching, and the Dominicans learned to value poverty even more than they had done from the first. Their example gave cohesion to two groups from among the many hermit-bodies, more or less unofficial and disorganized, which already existed ; these were now organized, and received papally approved rules, under the names of Carmelites and Austin Friars.

This word 'friars'—'fratres,' brethren—long used in monasteries and similar religious communities, now acquired a special sense. The 'friar' differed from the older 'religious' on

two essential points. **Organization of the Mendicant Friars** He was poor not only individually but collectively ; and, again, no longer secluded in his cloister, he used it only as a base of operations for missionary work out in the world. The Canons Regular, it is true, often acted as parish priests, but in far less numbers and with far less freedom of movement than the friars. Zealous popes and bishops naturally utilised this new enthusiasm ; and the friars reacted favourably upon the older orders. Gregory IX, the personal friend of S. Francis, and one of the greatest canon lawyers among the popes, published a series of strict reforming statutes in 1236 ; but these were ill kept. Then the friars themselves decayed rapidly,

and within less than a century the need for regeneration was greater than ever.

Presently came another great reforming pope, Benedict XII, himself a Cistercian, who published a still more elaborate series of reforming decrees for Benedictines and for Austin Canons. Benedict, while accepting certain relaxations as ingrained and inevitable, strove to check further abandonment of the strict ideal; but his statutes had little effect. Monastic decay was one of the most important themes for discussion at the great Councils of Constance (1414-1418) and Basel (1431-1443). Much real good was done, especially in Germany and France and Italy, where things were worse than in England. But the transitory nature of this reform is frankly confessed at the end of the century by Trithemius, himself one of the most distinguished of the reforming abbots. A little book published in 1503 by a French abbot, Guy Jouennaux, is equally despairing

In England there was no house quite so efficient as the best reformed monasteries abroad, but the general average of discipline was higher; yet, even in England, it needed only a great crisis to bring the whole edifice down. The king wanted to be master in his own kingdom; and the monks, by their very constitution, were papal subjects entrenched in camps throughout the land. Again, the king wanted money, and here was vast spoil to be had without seriously disquieting the people. Therefore, in his quarrel with the pope, he naturally struck first at the monasteries.

The injustices committed at the Dissolution were very great, and the waste was great, even when we have discounted all interested exaggerations. We may truly plead that far worse injustices and cruelties, with at least equal rapacity, were shown in the abolition of the Templar Order (1311) carried out by an orthodox French king with papal help; but the English Dissolution, considered in its actual methods, remains one of the least creditable chapters in English history. When, however, we consider its essential principle we may see that it has been justified by events.

In the subsequent history of monasticism there is little to record which is not a repetition of the preceding story, with its alternations of decay and reform, but gradual downward trend. In Protestant Germany the Dissolution was better managed than in the British Isles; a far larger proportion of monastic buildings and revenues was devoted to educational purposes. In Catholic Germany and Austria the Counter-Reformation brought forth a certain revival of monastic regularity and learning; the Benedictines, especially, produced here a good many distinguished students and writers.

But it was in France that the Benedictines did by far the most remarkable work, especially in the reformed Congregation of St. Maur. This reform, indeed, is in every way the most important episode in monastic history between the foundation of the Jesuits and the French Revolution. The Maurine Congregation was founded in 1621 under the patronage of Gregory XV and Louis XIII; Cardinal Richelieu, who was then fighting hard for a general monastic reform, welcomed the movement, and attempted to press all the Benedictines of France into it. There he failed; but in process of time a hundred and ninety-one houses joined, none of which had less than nine inmates. There must have been more than two thousand monks in the whole congregation.

Their regularity of life, and the care with which they educated their novices, led naturally to a systematic development of scholarship, though this had not been directly contemplated from the first. Men of real learning thus bred scholars who were even better than themselves; one monastery stimulated another; they vied in research and production and co-operation; they formed in effect a university, which had its ramifications throughout the kingdom, and was in constant correspondence with scholars abroad. Their strength was not so much in original thought as in research; in the discovery and editing of valuable documents, the production of standard editions of the Fathers, the printing of medieval chronicles and the compilation of elaborate and

**The Congregation  
of St. Maur**

**Real reasons for  
the Dissolution**

scientific auxiliaries to history, such as *The Art of Verifying Dates*, and *The Literary History of France*. Their refusal to take part against the Jansenists, and their Gallican leanings, laid them open to bitter attacks from the Jesuits; serious abuses finally crept into this select congregation, and its learning had already deteriorated when the Revolution swept it away with the rest of the monasteries.

For this there had been already orthodox precedents on the Continent. The Jesuits were expelled, between 1759 and 1767, from Portugal, France and Spain; and in 1775 Clement XIV suppressed the Order altogether. About the same time, the reforming emperor of Austria, Joseph II, suppressed a large number of monasteries, and his brother Leopold of Tuscany wished to go even farther in his own dominions, but found the opposition too strong. After the French Revolution both Germany and Spain dissolved their monasteries; Italy did so in 1873; France at the end of the nineteenth century. In

South America the greater part have been dissolved at different dates, but they have revived in different ways. There is a kernel in the monastic idea which appeals to many men's hearts and is of great ethical and religious value; therefore all that the state can do, or ought to do, is to restrict and regulate these communities on the same principles on which it deals with other associations.

Similarly, the institution still survives in non-Christian countries. In Ceylon and China the Buddhist monasteries are said to be much decayed; but in Japan and Burma, and especially Tibet, they are still large and populous. Of the 30,000 present-day inhabitants of Lhasa it is said that 10,000 are monks. In India it is difficult to distinguish sharply between the wandering ascetics and the settled communities of monks; yet these latter are numerous and often wealthy, and the government has sometimes had to interfere in order to prevent mismanagement of their considerable revenues.



**FOUNTAINS ABBEY : ENGLAND'S LOVELIEST RELIC OF MONASTICISM**

With the possible exception of Tintern Abbey, the remains of Fountains Abbey near Ripon in Yorkshire are the most complete monastic ruins in England, comprising as they do the church with its tower, the chapter house, cloisters and other parts of the building. The abbey, which was a Cistercian house, peopled by monks from S. Mary's Abbey, York, was begun about 1140 and took nearly 200 years to complete. The House was dissolved by Henry VIII and the ruins and lands were sold.

*Photo, Valentine & Co.*



# CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE AGE OF JUSTINIAN

The Colour and Life of the Metropolis of the Eastern Roman Empire in the Days of its Splendour

By F. N. PRYCE

Assistant Keeper of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum

FROM the study of the Eastern Roman Empire one fact emerges clearly—the dominant and decisive part played throughout by the capital. Constantinople was not only the seat of a highly centralised administration, the great market to which wealth and commerce flowed, the Holy City of the Patriarchs and the Fathers; but for centuries it stands out as the citadel of the Empire and the stronghold of civilization. Barbarian hordes could sweep over the provinces leaving a desert behind, but against the grey walls of Constantinople they dashed in vain; and behind those ramparts civilized society was safe, presently to emerge and recover lost ground as the tide of invasion ebbed. For a thousand years the city remained the one centre of cultured life amid surrounding savagery; and if older writers such as Gibbon can only tell us of the follies and crimes of its inhabitants, modern historians more justly lay the emphasis on the heroic side of their long struggle against Goth and Persian, Bulgar and Saracen—beaten again and again, but never losing hope in the destiny of their Holy Christian Empire.

For this unique destiny the geographical position of the city is responsible. Constantinople stands on some of the most important trade routes of the ancient and modern world, where Europe and Asia stretch towards each other until they are separated by only a mile of sheltered water, the Bosphorus. In the heart of the city the Golden Horn provides a safe harbour for shipping. Northwards up the Bosphorus a short sea voyage leads to the Black Sea, the corn lands of the Danube and the boundless plains of Russia. Southwards another sea way through the Dardanelles brings us to the Mediterranean world.

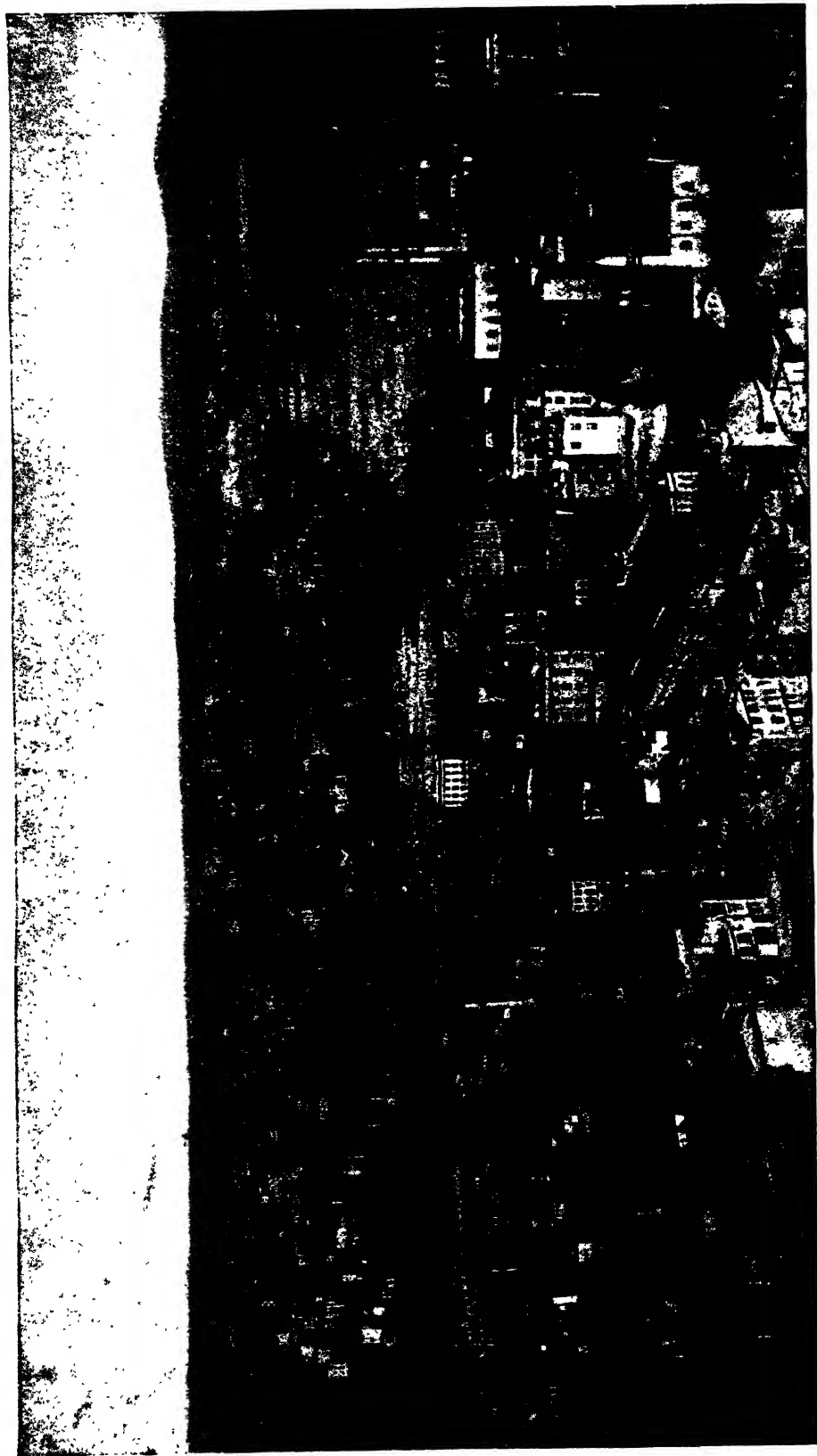
Constantinople is the most accessible of cities; and at the same time it is the most easily defended in time of need. The long defiles of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, properly garrisoned, can be rendered impregnable against any attack by sea. Nor is the land approach much easier. An army attacking on the Asiatic side, after fighting its way to within sight of the city, would find all further progress barred by the Bosphorus; and on the European side the peninsula on which the city stands is narrow, and can be blocked by successive lines of fortifications.

Yet with all these advantages of site, Constantinople does not appear to be one of those cities which, like London or New York, inevitably and spontaneously grow and develop into great world centres. Its foundation was a matter of afterthought, and for many centuries it remained a town of second-rate importance, with a bad name on account of the morals of its inhabitants. Constantine the Great hesitated long before making it his capital. True, after this event the natural possibilities of the site asserted themselves and for Constantinople a long period of splendour had begun. But there is no evidence that without the accident of imperial favour the city would ever have achieved a career.

Perhaps the reason for this is that there is no extent of fertile land immediately around the city; perhaps the climate provides the explanation. Constantinople lies on the latitude of Naples and Madrid. It is cooler than either of these cities; yet in the summer there are months of damp heat, when one is glad to escape from the stuffy lanes of Pera and Stamboul to the

Factors in the City's prosperity





#### EUROPE'S WARDEN AGAINST ASIA : SITE OF CONSTANTINOPLE'S LONG AND HEROIC STRUGGLES

Constantinople stands upon two continents and is made up of three distinct cities—Stamboul and Galata in Europe, and Scutari in Asia. Stamboul, seen in the foreground of this photograph, occupies the site of the ancient Byzantium and is the most crowded and Turkish part of Constantinople. It stands on a tongue of land between the Sea of Marmora and the Golden Horn. Galata, with its suburb Pera, on the other side of the Golden Horn, is the European quarter; it is connected with Stamboul by two bridges, of which the New Bridge is seen here. Scutari, across the Bosphorus, is the Asiatic quarter.

*Photo, E. W. Brigg*

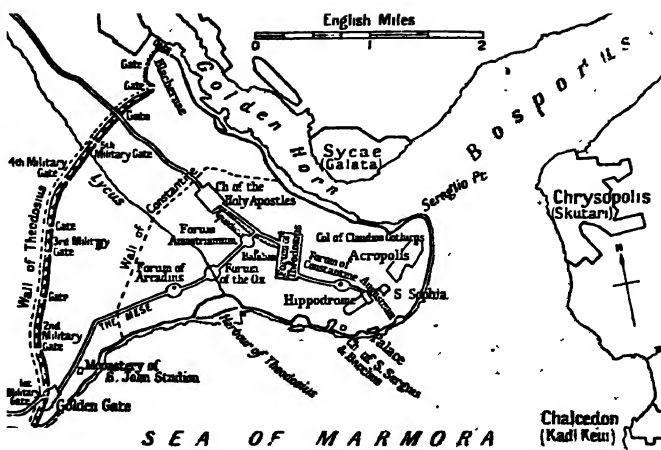
open ground outside where the north wind blows cool and fresh. Standing on the moorland heights and looking down on the sweltering city, one realizes the age-long tragedy of Constantinople—the inevitable degeneration of any race or dynasty that inhabited the city, and the close proximity of the uplands whence came men of tougher fibre to reinvigorate or to conquer.

The foundation of Constantinople goes back to the far-off days of Greek colonisation. In 658 B.C. a party of adventurers from the little city of Megara, to the south of Athens, pushing north in search of a new home, settled on the site; their leader was one Byzas who gave his name to the new settlement, Byzantium. It was the last of several similar foundations; another party had landed seventeen years earlier on the other side of the Bosphorus at Chalcedon, the modern suburb of Kadi Keui; and it was a favourite jest of later Greeks to call these pioneers blind for having chosen Chalcedon, when only a mile away, over the strait, lay the matchless site of the great city.

At the southern end of the Bosphorus, farthest from the Black Sea, a deep tongue of water, the Golden Horn, cuts into the land on the European

side for about six miles, its first Millennium running at first due west, then curving to the north-west. Within the triangle thus cut off the ground is undulating, rising in places to well over two hundred feet. Later historians speak of the Seven Hills of Constantinople in imitation of the Seven Hills of Rome; but speaking broadly there are only two—a long ridge running westwards from the point of the triangle along the Golden Horn and a flat plateau in the south-west, the two being separated by a little brook, the Lycus.

Byzas built his new town on the apex of the triangle, round what is now Seraglio Point. The details of its history for the first thousand years need not detain us. The town flourished, but never won any



PLAN OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Byzantium was founded by Greeks from Megara in 658 B.C. and grew from an original acropolis to a walled city. Constantine's city, begun in A.D. 328 and dedicated in 330, covered four times the area of Byzantium, but was rapidly outgrown, and in 413 was extended to the Theodosian fortifications extending from the Sea of Marmora to the Golden Horn

pre-eminence, and its inhabitants, a medley of seafarers of all nationalities, had not a good reputation, as we have mentioned above. Few remains of this first period are now visible. Near Seraglio Point still stands a column called the Column of Claudius Gothicus, erected, the inscription tells us, to commemorate a defeat of Gothic pirates in A.D. 267; and the battle-mented wall running round the Old Seraglio, though in its present state largely a Turkish restoration, may represent the wall of the ancient Acropolis or Citadel.

In 328 Constantine the Great came to the decision that Byzantium should be the future capital of his Empire. The reasons which led him to transfer the government from Italy to the East have been discussed elsewhere (see Chronicle XII), but what concerns us here is that Byzantium in the first instance was not even considered as a possible site for the capital. Constantine first thought of Salonica; he actually began to build at Troy, on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles, roughly opposite Cape Hellas. The Bosphorus, however, seemed more suitable than the Dardanelles, and even then his first choice was Chalcedon, over the water. At length his mind was made up, and a new era began for Byzantium, which now became New Rome or Constantinopolis, the City of Constantine.



#### SECTION OF THE THEodosIAN WALLS

Anthemius, praetorian prefect during the minority of Theodosius II, built the Inner Wall of the Theodosian fortifications in A.D. 413. It is nearly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, 30 feet high and about 15 feet thick, and had 96 towers. In 447 it was reinforced by the Outer Wall, breastwork and moat.

*From Van Millingen, 'Byzantine Constantinople,' John Murray*

Workmen and materials were brought from all parts of the Empire, and the work was pushed forward with such speed that in two years Constantine was able to take up his residence in his chosen capital. The area of the city was quadrupled by absorbing more of the peninsula, and a wall was built to defend the land side. Within this area the plan of the main streets can be traced at the present day; but of the actual buildings of Constantine scarcely a trace remains. Earthquakes, fires and rebuildings by later emperors—in particular Justinian—have effaced most memorials of the founder. The wall was abandoned a hundred years later—the city had outgrown it, and a new line a mile

farther out was built in the reign of Theodosius II, about A.D. 413. This is the famous wall of Constantinople, of which a brief description must be given.

The fortifications consisted of a triple line of walls, each commanding the one in front, and a moat. The inner wall was the main rampart, thirty feet high, about fifteen feet thick, built solid, with battlements along the top and strengthened with ninety-six towers projecting on the outer side. The towers were about sixty feet high and square, hexagonal or octagonal in shape. The second wall was separated from the first by a terrace sixty feet broad; it is smaller, being from two to six feet in thickness and twenty-seven feet high on the outer side; and its towers were set between those of the inner wall. Outside this came a second terrace, then the third wall, a breastwork standing directly against the moat, which is sixty feet broad and sometimes reaches a depth of over twenty feet. As the wall ran up and down across country, the problem of keeping water in the moat was solved in an ingenious fashion. Walls

were built across at intervals cutting it into compartments at different levels; in the walls were concealed water-pipes; thus the whole was flooded quickly and water held in position even at the highest levels.

The wall ran across the peninsula from sea to sea. At the northern end changes were subsequently made; but elsewhere we still see the triple-line fortifications which proved impregnable until the invention of gunpowder. We still see the gap through which the Turks entered in 1453, and where the last of all the Constantines set a worthy end to the long line of emperors by dying in the breach. These are perhaps the most fascinating ruins in the world; not only did they defend

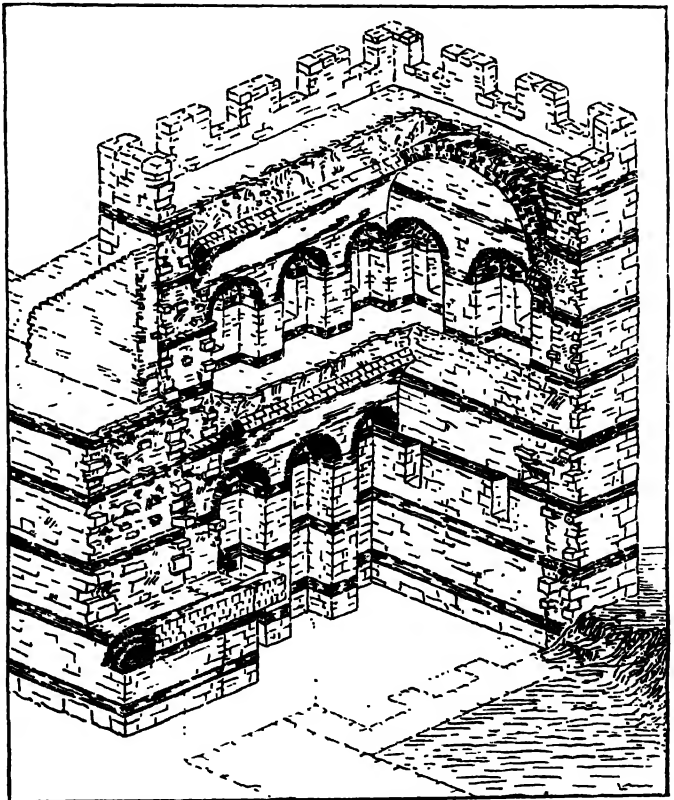
civilization from the onrush of the barbarian for a thousand years, but they profoundly influenced Western architecture. The crusaders brought the fame of these ramparts even to England; and he who has not seen them may form some idea of their grandeur from Carnarvon or the other castles of the crusading king, Edward I.

Simultaneously other walls were built around the water fronts of the peninsula, so that Constantinople was shut in on all sides. The sea walls were single, with towers, built as close to the sea as possible to allow no space for landing parties. Lastly, about forty miles from the city, a wall, the Long Wall, was built across to the Black Sea by the emperor Anastasius in A.D. 502, as an outer line of defence, but it required too many troops to hold it effectively, and fell into disuse. It is curious that this wall corresponds roughly with the modern Chatalja Lines, where the Turks held the Bulgars in 1912.

Entrance to the city was provided by many gates, of which that nearest the Sea of Marmora on the south was the most important. It was called the Golden Gate, and originally glittered with plates of gold and sculptures of marble. Through it the emperor entered the city in triumph after a victorious campaign, mounted on a white horse, clad in purple robes embroidered with pearls and gold, his crown on his head, his sceptre in his hand. On reaching the gate he dismounted and, falling thrice on his face, humbly acknowledged the divine aid to which he owed his triumph. Then mounting again he passed through the gate, where the civic authorities knelt before him offering a crown of gold, while the populace rent the air with shouts of 'Glory to God who restores to us our sovereign crowned with victory! Glory to Thee, All Holy Trinity, for we behold our Emperor victorious! Welcome, Victor,

most valiant sovereign.' But darker memories than these festive scenes cluster around the battered ruins. In the days of the Turkish sultans, the building was used as a state prison, and every stone in the pile is stained with the blood of their victims.

From the Golden Gate one great street, the 'Mese,' bordered by colonnades, traversed the whole city. On the right, on entering, was the famous monastery of S. John Studion, which maintained a thousand monks. The church of the monastery still stands, a long building with galleries and an apse; it dates from a period a little more remote than the time of Justinian. Continuing, the street passes through several squares, or forums. In the first, the Forum of Arcadius, stood a sculptured column with a statue of Arcadius; then came the Forum of the



INTERIOR OF A THEODOSIAN TOWER

Most of the towers that flanked the Theodosian inner wall were square. They were two-storeyed, the lower chamber, used as a guardhouse, being entered from the city; the upper one, from the parapet walk. Outside steps led to the roof.

*From Van Millingen 'Byzantine Constantinople'*

Ox, where was a large brazen hollow statue of a bull within which, so the rumour ran, 'Julian the Apostate roasted Christians alive.

In the next square, the Amastrinum, criminals were publicly beheaded or mutilated; this is about the centre of the city, and here another main thoroughfare branched off, leading past the great Church of the Holy Apostles, where the emperors were buried. Continuing down the Mese, one reached the Forum of Theodosius, where there stood a memorial of that emperor; and here was the university, with rows of lecture halls for the thirty professors appointed by the emperor to instruct the youth. Next came the Forum of Constantine, containing a column of porphyry, now called the Burnt Column, on which was a statue of that emperor. A little farther on the Mese



**SEA WALL ON THE BOSPORUS**

On the seaward side Constantinople was defended by five miles of wall flush with the sea, with towers at intervals. A breakwater of boulders protected the base, and marble in the lower courses gave some safeguard against erosion.

*Photo, J. Ludwigsohn*



**THE GOLDEN GATE**

Ten gates pierced the Theodosian wall. The southernmost, nearest the Sea of Marmora, was the state entrance to the capital. It was built of marble, enriched with gold and sculpture, and was flanked by two strong towers.

ends in the Augusteum, around which were grouped the most important buildings, the Imperial Palace, the Great Church of the Holy Wisdom (S. Sophia) and the Hippodrome.

The palace of the Turkish sultans, the 'Old Seraglio,' stood on the point between the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, where part of it may still be seen. But in the time of Justinian this was a squalid quarter, filled with drinking shops for sailors. The Imperial Palace lay farther south, covering a huge area that extended from the Hippodrome to the sea. As built by Constantine it was comparatively small, but Justinian rebuilt it on a scale of enlarged splendour.

As one entered from the Augusteum through the Bronze Gate, to right and left corridors led to the barracks of the Imperial Guards; in front was a domed vestibule with golden mosaics depicting

the conquest of Africa and Italy, and the triumph of Justinian and Theodora. This gave access to the state banquetting hall and to the throne room, where three steps of porphyry led to the throne, a chair of ivory inlaid with jewels, set under a dome of silver. The ceiling of this room was adorned with a large cross of gold. Beyond this were the private apartments, and beyond these again gardens and the imperial polo ground. Against the sea were two minor palaces, originally detached but incorporated with the main residence by Justinian. One was the Porphyry Palace, containing a bedroom lined with purple porphyry, which custom enjoined that every empress should occupy at her lying-in; hence the imperial princes are distinguished as 'Born in the Purple.' Some ruins of this palace remained until they were destroyed

to make room for the railway; of the other, much of the sea-front can still be seen—a lofty wall pierced by openings which gave on to balconies; and this palace has a special interest, as it was the residence occupied by Justinian when crown prince.

Not far away is the only building of all this splendour that still remains intact—the small Church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus, or as it is often called 'little S. Sophia,' also built by Justinian. Otherwise only doubtful fragments of walls and foundations can now be traced of these buildings, and until the ground is systematically explored we cannot fix the exact position of the various parts of the palace. We know that in the twelfth century it was already neglected and ruinous; it was too huge and costly for the Empire in its decadence to maintain, and later emperors



JUSTINIAN'S MARBLE PALACE OVERLOOKING THE SEA

Constantine's Imperial Palace lay between the Hippodrome and the Sea of Marmora. Two minor palaces stood in the grounds: the Porphyry Palace, and the palace assigned to the Persian prince Hormisdas when he sought refuge with Constantine, and afterwards occupied by Justinian and Theodora before their accession to the throne. Its splendid façade, pierced with windows set in marble casements that once opened on to balconies, is still a notable point in the line of the sea walls.

Photo, Dr. Sandler



#### AN IMPERIAL THANK-OFFERING

Justinian built the church now known as Little S. Sofia in 527, dedicating it to SS. Sergius and Bacchus in gratitude for their intervention on his behalf when threatened with death on a charge of treason. This square domed church is the only unaltered survivor of all Roman Constantinople's splendour.

*From Van Millingen, 'Byzantine Constantinople,' John Murray*

resided in the Palace of Blachernae on the Golden Horn, at the other extremity of the city.

We possess elaborate accounts of the ceremonial observed at the imperial court. Every morning at seven the grand janitor accompanied by the officers of the guard threw open the main entrance. An hour later the emperor issued from his private apartments surrounded by his eunuch attendants and, proceeding to one of the palace chapels, said his prayers publicly, after which he assumed his seat in the throne room. The steward of the household then knelt before him to receive the imperial orders, after which the nobles and officials who had meanwhile assembled in the anteroom were admitted to audience.

At their entrance all knelt save the 'patricians,' who merely bowed deeply

and were greeted by the emperor with a kiss. These public audiences were largely occupied with receptions of foreign embassies and in presenting commissions on appointment to office, which were signed by the emperor in purple ink, the use of which was illegal for subjects. At ten the reception terminated and the palace was solemnly closed until two, when the same formalities were again observed and the emperor remained accessible till five, when public duties were ended for the day.

If in the Palace we find the stiff formalism of despotism, in the adjoining Hippodrome the democratic side of the Empire received free expression. Here the turbulent city mob indicated its sentiments towards the government, and passions often ran so high as to threaten to overthrow the dynasty. The Hippodrome, or race-course, the modern Atmeidan, has become a long, narrow garden bordered by modern buildings. We have to imagine that these have disappeared and should mentally replace them by long

lines of marble seats rising tier on tier, until the vast mass could accommodate seventy thousand spectators. Near the northern side, where the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed now stands, was the 'Kathisma,' the imperial box. On the roof of this stood the four famous bronze horses which now adorn S. Mark's at Venice; the Doge Dandolo took them away in 1204 when the crusaders stormed and sacked the city. The features of the course itself were the same as in the Circus Maximus at Rome (see Chap. 71).

The 'spina' down the centre is now buried underground, but its position is marked by four monuments. The first is the memorial fountain built by Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1895; the others were standing in the days of Justinian—a masonry column once covered with metal plates, an Egyptian obelisk and a battered

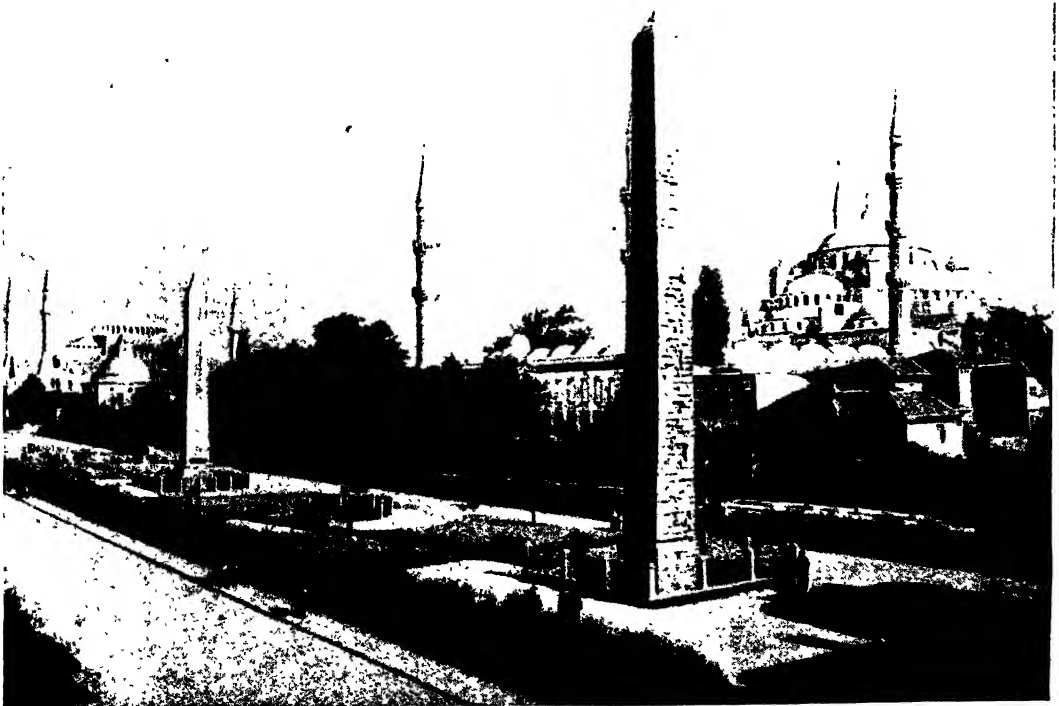


stump of twisted bronze which is the most interesting of all. Constantine brought it from the Greek shrine of Delphi, where it had been dedicated by the Greek victors at Plataea in 479 B.C. as a memorial of the Persian War; and underneath the rust we may still read faintly inscribed the names of the Greek cities who then banded together to repel the invader.

As the largest open space in the city, the Hippodrome was the scene of many public ceremonials and gatherings. Here a little before Justinian's day, on the sudden death of the emperor Zeno, the mob rushed into the arena and filled the air with shouts of 'Give us an Emperor! Lord have mercy upon us! Give the Romans an orthodox Emperor! Give us an Emperor who will not tax us too heavily!' And the emperor chosen, Anastasius, having taken the oath, was invested in the Hippodrome with the imperial robes and raised on a

shield in view of all the people, who cried: 'God bless our Christian Emperor.' A few years later during the games this same emperor ordered the arrest of some rioters who had thrown stones into the arena, whereupon a general tumult arose and the emperor was pelted with stones from all sides and forced to flee to the palace to save his life. But the original purpose of the Hippodrome was to provide accommodation for the games, which took place, as at old Rome, at stated intervals throughout the year.

The combats of gladiators which formed the principal attraction of a Roman holiday had disappeared by Justinian's time, as unworthy of an Empire that professed the Christian religion. Criminals were still sometimes set to fight wild beasts; acrobatic feats and performances were often provided; but the main source of interest was the chariot races. The modern craze



**WHERE THE BLUES AND GREENS CONTESTED : SITE OF THE HIPPODROME**

Severus began and Constantine the Great completed the Hippodrome that became the centre of the democratic life of Constantinople. Under the Turks it was used for horse exercises and called the Atmeidan, the name still given to the long garden that covers its site. The obelisks mark the position of the 'spina' down the centre. The imperial box or Kathisma stood on the ground now occupied by the mosque of Sultan Ahmed, seen on the right; in the left background is S. Sophia.

*Photo, E.N.A.*





THE HORSES OF LYCURGUS

These superb gilt bronze horses originally stood on Nero's triumphal arch in Rome, and were then transferred to Trajan's arch. Constantine removed them to Byzantium and set them on the roof of the imperial tribune in the Hippodrome.

In 1204 they were carried to Venice, where they now are.

*Photo, Donald McLeish*

for sport is only a feeble reflection of the fanatical enthusiasm that they aroused.

The chariots were low structures, open behind, drawn by two or more often four horses. Four cars usually competed in each race, and from early days the audience was accordingly divided into four factions, the Blues, Greens, Reds and Whites, named probably after the colour of the charioteer they supported. In Justinian's days the Reds and Whites had become practically unimportant—why, we do not know; perhaps only two chariots now competed together—and the Blues and Greens monopolised the popular favour. This division was carried far beyond the race-course into all activities of life. It was a division of opinion on every topic of the day, which often led to virtual civil war. Even emperors found it politic to support one or other of the factions—

Justinian was of the Blues—and the colour which did not win the emperor's favour at once formed itself into a party in opposition, which criticised his administration and often intrigued to bring about his downfall.

The unruly spirit of the factions is well illustrated by the story of the Nika riots, one of the most picturesque episodes of Justinian's reign. His favourites, the Blues, presuming on the protection of the court, gradually overstepped all limits, and went about in armed bands, on the pretence of chastising the Greens but in reality to rob and murder peaceful citizens. In law-suits between a Green and a Blue the judges were bribed or terrorised into giving a verdict for the Blue; and the government officials, instead of preserving order, openly aided and abetted the offenders. At length, the Greens resolved on a public protest to the emperor.

On Sunday, January 11, 532, uproar prevailed in the Hippodrome; we must imagine more than thirty thousand Blues on

one side and as many Greens on the other, hurling insults and doubtless missiles at each other across the spina. The emperor and empress arrived in state, and the spokesmen of the Greens came forward to represent their grievances to the emperor. A long wrangle took place, the Blues and Greens accusing each other, while the emperor ordered both sides to be quiet and let the games proceed. At last Justinian lost patience and bade the Greens begone as a set of 'blasphemers and enemies of God'; whereupon the Greens, muttering 'Enemies of God, are we? Thank Heaven, we are not Blues!' retired in a body from the Hippodrome, turning their backs upon the Kathisma, the ultimate insult to the Sacred Emperor.

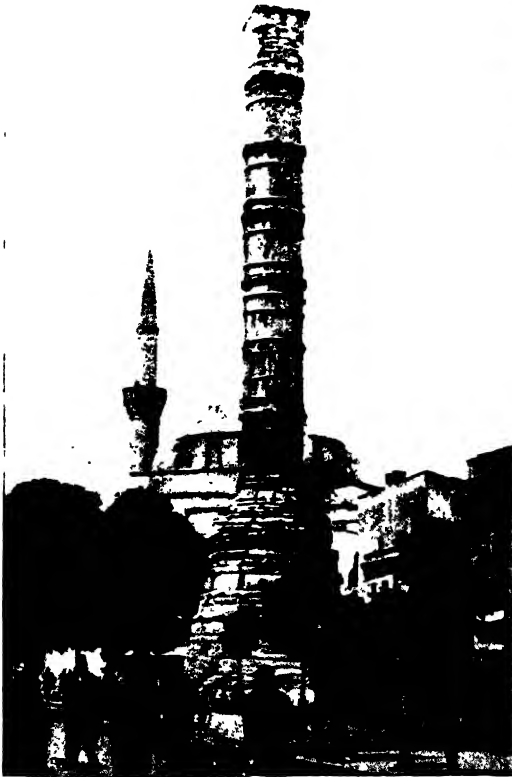
The emperor's sensibilities were evidently deeply ruffled. That evening he gave orders for an example to be made

of the most insolent. But the police sadly bungled their task; they made seven arrests, and among these were two Blues. And on Tuesday, when the games were resumed, was seen the unusual spectacle of Blues and Greens united in praying to the emperor for the release of their friends. A slight concession now would have ended the trouble, but Justinian, greatly annoyed, remained sternly silent; and as the hours passed the clamour grew more intense and the popular excitement more frenzied. Instead of the usual 'Victory to the Emperor Justinian,' ominous cries of 'Victory to the Blues and Greens' swept along the Hippodrome (hence from the Greek word 'nika,' victory, the whole affair is known as the Nika riot). The races over, Justinian left the Hippodrome and the factions, seeing their last hope of the prisoners'



**DELPHI'S SERPENT COLUMN**

This column is formed of three intertwined bronze serpents, whose heads once supported the golden tripod dedicated at Delphi by the Greek states in 479 B.C. after the battle of Plataea and removed by Constantine to his Hippodrome.



**THE 'BURNT COLUMN'**

This porphyry column marks the site of Constantine's forum. Originally it was topped by a bronze statue representing that emperor and was over 120 feet high. It has been much injured by fire—hence its popular name.

*Photo, E.N.A.*

release disappointed, made an attempt to rush the palace. A furious fight took place around the Bronze Door; and finding it impossible to fight their way in, the mob hurled firebrands, and much of the palace together with the adjoining Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom was soon ablaze.

For the next few days chaos prevailed in the city. The officials were paralysed; many fled for their lives. Of the military forces, several units openly joined the insurgents. Even the guards of the Palace were doubtful in their sympathies and the only troops to be depended on were the foreign legions. With these on Thursday the general Belisarius made a sortie from the palace, but was forced to retreat after a fierce battle in the streets, in the course of which many other buildings were burnt to the ground. On the following Sunday morning Justinian

resolved to make a final effort to recall his subjects' allegiance. He entered the Hippodrome and holding out a copy of the Gospels, said: 'By this holy book I swear to forgive you all. My sins have brought about this; I am guilty who did not listen to your cry for mercy.' He was here interrupted by loud cries of 'Ass, thou liest!' and was literally hooted back into the palace. The riot now took the form of a deliberate attempt to dethrone Justinian. A new emperor was proclaimed and installed in the Hippodrome, and a council was held to decide whether the palace should be attacked forthwith.

Meanwhile, another council was being held in the palace. Here the situation seemed desperate, and flight was considered the only resource when a speech of the empress Theodora changed the situation.

If you wish, O Emperor, to save yourself, we have money, there are ships, and there is the sea; yet reflect whether, once you have escaped, you would not prefer death to safety. For me, I think that the Empire would be a fine robe to be buried in.

These brave words animated her hearers; it was resolved to stay and fight. A few agents well supplied with money went out and endeavoured to win back the loyalty of the Blues, insinuating that the new



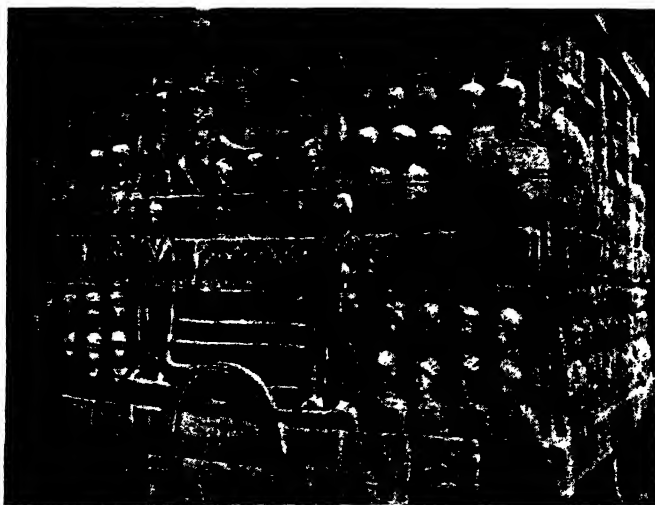
#### 'COMING ROUND THE BEND'

An ivory diptych bears this animated picture of racing chariots turning round the 'meta' at the end of the 'spina' in the Constantinople Hippodrome: a critical moment in the race and one fraught with danger to the charioteers

*Courtesy of G. Nicodemi, Civici Instituti d'Arte, Brescia*

emperor would be certain to support the Greens. Belisarius rallied the loyal troops, led them into the Hippodrome, and charged the crowd. Taken by surprise and jammed helplessly together, the mob was cut down mercilessly. Over thirty thousand perished. In a few hours the rebellion had collapsed.

Immediately after the restoration of peace, Justinian set about rebuilding the burnt edifices on a scale of greater magnificence than before. Now was begun the great Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom, or S. Sophia, one of the wonders of the world and the grandest memorial of the reign. The exterior is a plain mass of brickwork, unadorned and unimposing; but the interior is of surpassing splendour. It is a great hall two hundred and seventy feet long lined through-



#### IMPERIAL SPECTATORS AT THE GAMES

In A.D. 390 Theodosius erected in the Hippodrome at Constantinople a syenite obelisk brought from Heliopolis. Bas-reliefs on the pedestal depict incidents in the Hippodrome. Here the emperor is shown with three of his family watching the spectacle from his box and attended by guards and officials.

*Photo, A. J. B. Wace in Journal of Hellenic Studies*

out with the rarest marbles and costliest alabasters. At the sides are rows of lofty columns, above which are galleries reserved for women; at the ends, half-domes rise up towards the great dome a hundred and eighty feet high, which, says a contemporary, 'seems to float in the air.'

All this remains much as Justinian left it, save that the Turks covered with white-wash some of the mosaic decoration when they converted the building into a mosque in 1453. What we do not see now is the wonderful furniture and metal work with which Justinian adorned all parts. The roof was plated with pure gold, the altar was of the same precious metal. The patriarch's throne was of gilded silver and weighed nearly two tons. One chronicler tells us that the cost of the church and furniture amounted to the incredible sum of fourteen millions sterling.

We need not wonder that long before Justinian's death the Empire was bankrupt when we remember that this huge expenditure was only

**Vast expenditure on public buildings** one item on the imperial building list.

While S. Sophia was being erected, a mile away the empress Theodora was rebuilding on a scale of almost equal magnificence the Church of the Holy Apostles, the Westminster Abbey of Constantinople. Here in 1204 Justinian's tomb was found by the crusaders, who burst open the porphyry coffin and looked upon the emperor's body, still intact after six hundred years. Not a vestige of the building now remains; and the Mosque of Mohammed II now stands on the site. It differed in plan from S. Sophia; instead of one great dome, it had five smaller domes; from it S. Mark's at Venice was copied.

Constantinople was a city of churches and shrines and the list of those which Justinian built or rebuilt during his long reign would fill pages; yet church building was only one of his activities. Not only in the capital but all over the Empire we find memorials of his reign. Scarcely any town could have been without some monument of the emperor's generosity. His military constructions for the defence of the Empire must have entailed immense expenditure of money and labour. Over

six hundred forts are said to have been built along the Danube frontier alone. The province of Africa to this day is filled with ruins of his castles and fortifications (see page 2262). He was undoubtedly one of the great builders of the world, but the effort exhausted the Empire.

After the public buildings we come to the residential quarters, in which the life of the ordinary citizen was spent. The city had grown hastily and carelessly; **Inadequate supervision of private builders** the emperor Constantine, impatient

to see his new capital filled with people and houses, seems to have exercised little supervision over private builders. The result was that the greater part of the area within the walls was covered with a network of narrow lanes, fifteen feet or less in width; and projecting balconies so often encroached upon these that, as one citizen complained, 'it was impossible to see the sun.' At night these lanes were lighted with oil-flares.

The houses of the wealthy were of two or more storeys, set around a central courtyard in which were fountains and plants. Externally they were of brick, with façades of sculptured columns of marble; internally they were often lined with polished marbles and gilded wood. The middle and poorer classes lived largely in blocks of flats which rose to an immense height over the narrow streets; the law limited the altitude to one hundred feet. The ground floor of such a building was often given up to shops, rows of open booths like the shops in the bazaars of Cairo or Damascus to-day. The luxury trades—the goldsmiths, the silk merchants—generally collected together in large covered bazaars, as again we find in the modern Orient.

Brick was the favourite building material, but wood must have been extensively employed, as fires seem to have been almost as frequent as in modern Constantinople, and a numerous fire brigade was in existence which rushed out with hatchets and buckets at every alarm. In fact, these residential quarters in Justinian's day must have looked much like their counterpart in the modern city, except in two points: the streets were kept

cleaner and the sanitation was better. An elaborate system of drainage had been installed from the first.

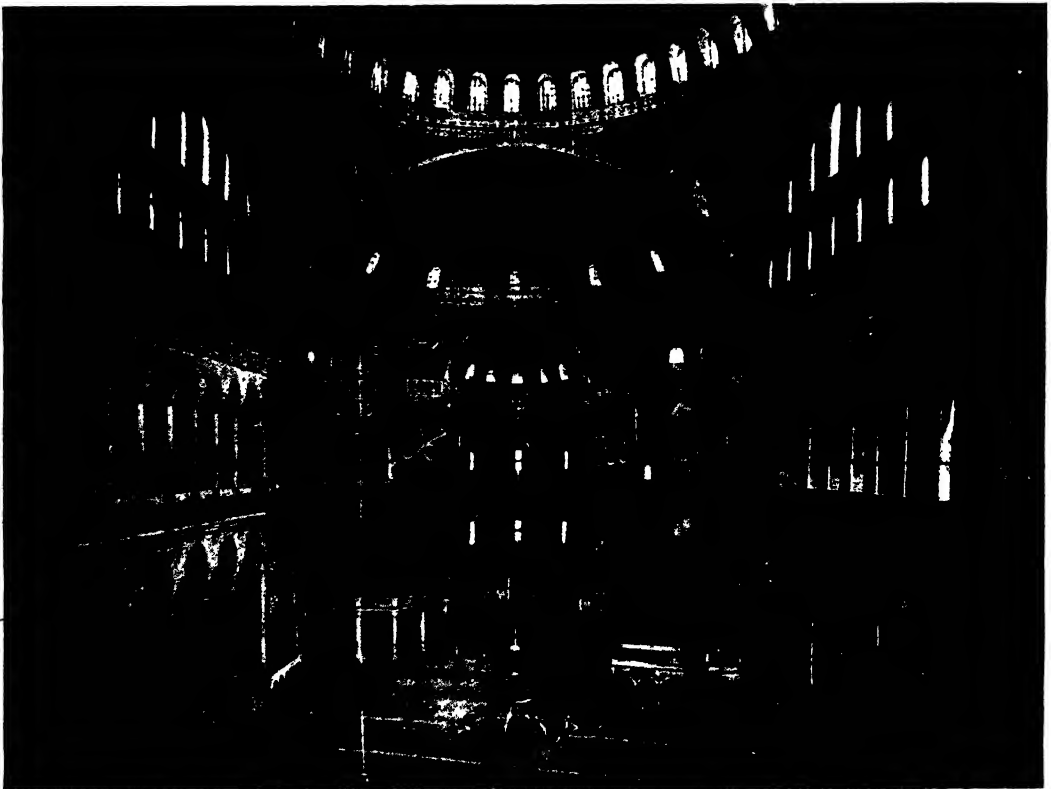
Outside the walls the shores of the Bosphorus were lined almost as thickly as to-day with villas and suburban residences; among these were several imperial palaces of great extent and magnificence. No statistics or census returns have come down to us, but several circumstances suggest that under Justinian the city was considerably more crowded than at present, and that we are safe in estimating the population at a minimum of a million. Perhaps it was much more.

The inhabitants must have been an exceedingly mixed breed: Greeks, Latins, Asiatics, with a strong element of barbarians from the north. Justinian's native tongue was Latin, and Latin still remained the official speech of the palace,

but the language in ordinary use throughout the city was Greek. Towards the close of the reign the laws began to be issued in Greek, and after this we find Greek definitely adopted as the speech of the government.

The water supply for this vast multitude was a problem. Normally it was brought from the forest of Belgrade, north of the city, by aqueducts of which one still remains a conspicuous ruin in the centre of Constantinople. But as in time of war these aqueducts might be cut by an enemy, huge underground cisterns were constructed within the city. Some of the largest of these were built by Justinian, one being the famous 'Palace of Waters'—an underground hall, the roof supported by 420 pillars set in rows.

Dress was quite different from the classical. Men wore a tunic down to the knees,



#### **S. SOFIA : A WORLD'S MASTERPIECE OF CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE**

Byzantine architecture sprang into full glory with S. Sofia, built by Justinian in 532-7, the cathedral church of Christian Constantinople and, since 1453, the principal mosque of Stamboul. The central square is covered by a vast dome, and east and west hemicycles covered by semi-domes, with minor apses beyond, extend the church to a length of 260 feet; with a width of 250 feet over all it is thus almost an exact square in plan. This photograph gives an eastward view of the interior.

*Photo, Sebak & Joallier*

over which was a longer cloak reaching to the ankles, fastened with a clasp on the right shoulder. Shoes and long coloured stockings completed the costume. Shaving was generally fashionable, though moustaches were often worn. The head was generally uncovered, while women, on the contrary, wore caps; their tunics were longer than the men's, reaching to the feet, and over it they wore a shawl. A load of jewelry, more remarkable for its costliness and ostentation than for the delicacy of its workmanship, was worn by both sexes. Much time and money were expended on the outward appearance, and the brightest colours, the costliest

materials—patterned stuffs from Persia, silks from China—were in demand. The imperial robes, as portrayed on the mosaics at Ravenna, were of purple stiff with cloth of gold and embroidery of pearls.

Colour was a passion in this age, which on the other hand was comparatively indifferent to form and outline. The interiors of contemporary buildings glowed with marbles and glass mosaics whereas outside they were often bare and ugly. Similarly the sculpture and carving of the period that has come down to us is poor and heavy, while painting and the minor arts show a sad degeneration from the days of Old Rome.

Nor was mental culture at a high level. Excepting the Christian Fathers, who form the subject of a special study (see Chap.

87), the age was barren of literature beyond some very second-rate chronicles. Education was much as it had been in the days of Old Rome—devoted to the study of the ancient classic writers and to the cultivation of a style of graceful writing and speaking. After learning to read and write, either from a private tutor or in an elementary school, a boy went to the university, which was plentifully supplied with professors of grammar and rhetoric in both Greek and Latin. The standard was



CONSTANTINOPLE'S OLDEST BASILICA

Sophia is typically Byzantine. In earlier times the basilican form of church had prevailed, such as the Studion Monastery Church of S. John, the Corinthian pillars of whose façade are shown above. Here the emperors took part in the service commemorating the Decapitation of S. John the Baptist.

From Van Millingen, 'Byzantine Churches of Constantinople,' John Murray

probably lower than in Old Rome. The most capable instructors were pagans, who were debarred from teaching. The old study of philosophy had largely disappeared; Justinian dealt a blow to the study when in the name of Christianity he suppressed the schools at Athens where a few harmless old professors lingered on as the sole representatives of the philosophic traditions of Plato and of Aristotle.

In technical and professional science, however, it is possible that some progress had been made. The men who built S. Sophia need not have feared comparison with the master-builders of Old Rome. In the army a high level of skill was reached by the engineers. The whole course of legal training was fundamentally changed by Justinian in connexion with his mighty work of codifying and arranging into a system the enormous mass of precedents and decisions which had accumulated for centuries. The young lawyer must now spend five years in study at one of the two recognized law schools, Constantinople and Beyrout, and the text books provided were the new codes of laws, which have become a permanent asset to civilization—the model and the prototype of nearly all modern codes of law.

Women were often left entirely without schooling. A girl was kept strictly indoors under close supervision until she was



THE CISTERN 'OF 1001 COLUMNS'

Justinian's reservoir, 'the underground palace' referred to in the text, is still used for water storage, and does not lend itself to photography. Almost as fine is this other, now dry, cistern built by Justinian in 528. It is 190 feet long by 176 feet wide, and the many-domed roof is supported by 212 pillars

*Photo, Sebak & Joallier*

married, which generally took place at the age of fourteen or fifteen. The marriage was arranged by the parents or a 'go-between,' and the bride was not permitted to see her intended husband before the marriage, which took place much after the old Roman fashion. In the evening a procession was formed and the bride was conveyed by torchlight to her future home amid music and much noisy revelry. The Christian rite of marriage did not become compulsory until the ninth century, long after Justinian's day.

On the other hand, the divorce laws show the growing influence of Christianity. In the latter days of Old Rome divorce had become practically a matter of mutual consent. But since the Empire became Christian, the law had undergone a series of compromises between the desire of the Church for the total abolition of divorce, and emperors who found themselves compelled to concede something to the frailties of human nature. Justinian ranks as one of the stricter emperors and legislated at length on the subject, tending always to restrict the grounds on which divorce could be admitted; for example, he abolished divorce by mutual consent unless the parties wished to enter a monastery. The restriction was very unpopular and probably was largely ignored; after his death it was repealed.

If the Byzantine girl was married in an Oriental way, there was nothing Oriental about her married life—no seclusion in the harem, no compulsion to appear veiled in the streets. Wives were in complete control of the household and enjoyed full liberty of action. We gather that they were prone to extravagance in dress and jewels and wasted hours daily at the baths, anointing themselves, and gossiping with their friends.

Some quaint superstitions were in use with regard to children, probably survivals of pagan belief. In choosing a name for a child, several candles, each with a name affixed, were lit, and the one that burned

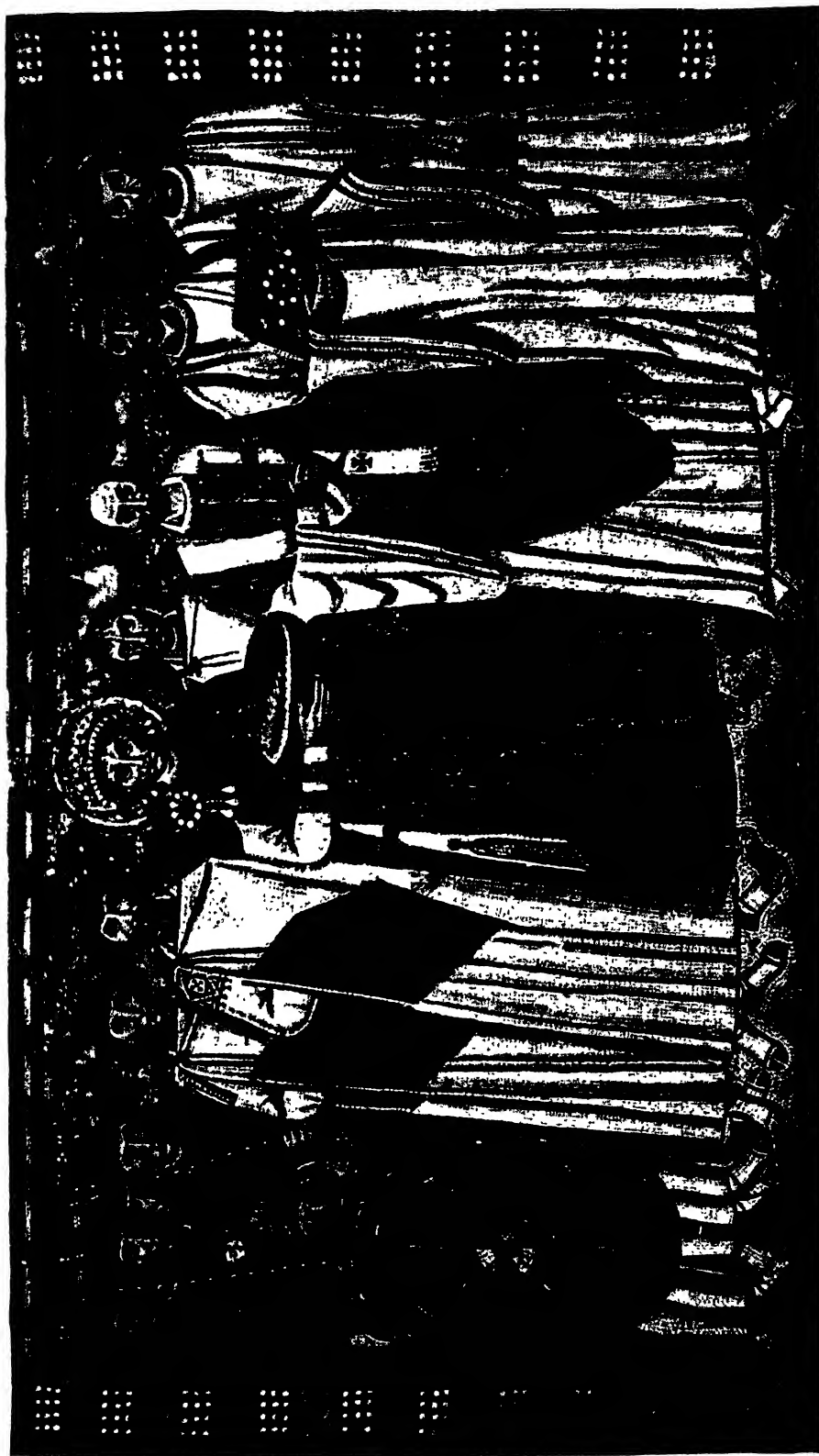
longest gave the child its name. Amulets, especially texts from the Gospels, were extensively used as a protection against the evil eye. At funerals, black clothes were worn and women were hired to mourn and wail. Burials were in cemeteries outside the city; only notables had the right to be buried within the churches.

Social life on the whole must have been dull. Apart from the games in the Hippodrome and music hall entertainments of a vulgar kind—the degenerate remains of the great days

of the Greek theatre—**Irreverent Levity in the Churches** the only public amusement was going to church. This duty was undertaken in a true spirit of Christian gaiety. The women, upstairs in the galleries, decked in all their jewels and finery, chattered and giggled, while female thieves pushing among them reaped a rich harvest; the men in the nave below eyed the women or discussed the topics of the day. The sermon was often interrupted by roars of laughter or bursts of applause; while an unpopular preacher ran the risk of being hissed out of his pulpit. Church bells were unknown, but the hour of service was announced by bangs with a mallet on a board hung in the porch.

Two hundred years earlier, when Constantine came to the decision to favour

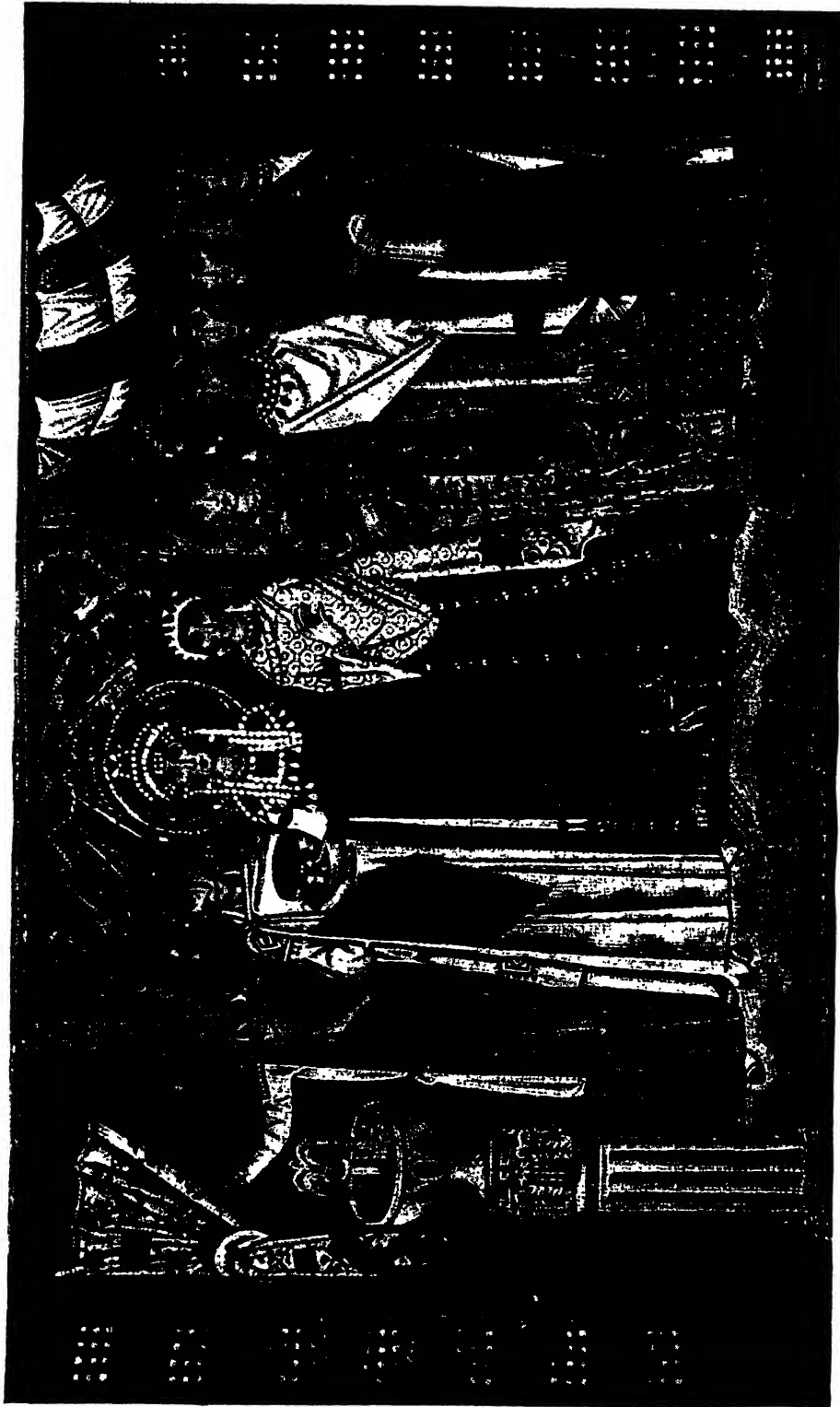




#### JUSTINIAN AND HIS MINISTERS WITH BISHOP MAXIMIAN SIGNALISE THE RECONQUEST OF ITALY

Ravenna rather than Rome had been the capital of Italy since the days of Honorius, and Justinian, after his generals had re-united the country with the Roman Empire, inherited the tradition of splendid building that had been carried on there. It was Justinian who put the finishing touches to San Vitale, begun under the Gothic successors of Theodoric; the mosaics in the choir show him, with his empress Theodora (see overleaf), making dedicatory offerings. He is attended by his armed bodyguard and civil ministers, while S. Maximian, bishop of Ravenna, is almost as conspicuous.

*Photo, Alinari*



# GORGEOUS ROBES WORN BY JUSTINIAN'S ACTRESS-CONSORT IN A CHURCH MOSAIC AT RAVENNA

All the many early Christian and Byzantine mosaics in Ravenna have suffered deplorably from conscienceless restoration, with no record kept of what is new and what (if any) is old. San Vitale has not escaped, but there is reason to think that the work there has been done more carefully and skillfully. If, therefore, one hesitates to recognize any portrait value in this figure of Theodora, at least the mosaic can be accepted as showing the level of Byzantine art at the period, and the sumptuous character of the court robes worn by the empress, her ministers and her ladies.

the Christians, it is thought that the proportion of Christians in the Empire did not exceed one in six; perhaps it was much less. By Justinian's day the outward victory of Christianity was complete and paganism only lingered in a few districts. Justinian himself was a pattern of the 'Orthodox Emperor, and wrote treatises to convert heretics. In his latter years he appears to have become thoroughly priest-ridden, neglecting the affairs of state while he argued questions of theology.

But in all classes, even the highest nobility, a strong sympathy for paganism often lingered; John the Cappadocian,

the able but unscrupulous minister of finance, was an almost open pagan.

Christianity with the majority must have been only a thin veneer, and beneath it lurked a thoroughly pagan attitude towards life. Certainly the morals of the city had in no way improved since the days of Old Rome. The curious point is that this people could yet become fanatically stirred by discussions on obscure points of Christian theology and metaphysics which to us are almost unintelligible and which could not have been appreciated by many of them. 'Heresies' and schisms which shook the Empire are discussed elsewhere (see Chap. 88); here it is only necessary to record the fact that very imperfectly Christianised as they were, the people of Constantinople were by no means irreligious.

Trade and commerce seem to have been in a flourishing state. The building works of Justinian provided work for thousands, while the commerce of the Empire naturally centred in Constantinople not only as the largest centre of population but because of its unique geographical advantages. In the north the lands around the Black Sea provided slaves, corn, skins and raw materials; from the far south, by way of the Red Sea, came negro slaves, ivory, gold and gems. In return the Empire exported manufactured stuffs and jewels. But the trade with the Far East is the most interesting economic factor. China sent large quantities of raw silk to supply the looms of the manufacturing towns; from India and Ceylon came pepper, gems,

spices, sandalwood and many an article in high demand in the capital. The Empire in return sent glass, enamels and fine stuffs; but the market for these was limited, and most of the imports were paid for in cash. The balance of trade was steadily against the Empire, and the constant drain of gold to the East is one of the reasons for the gradual impoverishment both of Old and of New Rome.

The age of Justinian saw the introduction into Europe of the culture of silk, which hitherto had come from China, by two routes: overland through Persia to the Caucasus, and thence along the Black Sea; or by sea to Ceylon, where it was transhipped, and thence up the Red Sea. The ships of the Empire do not appear to have sailed beyond Ceylon. But during much of Justinian's reign the Empire was at war with Persia, and this power not



SIXTH CENTURY COURT DRESS

It is idle to search Constantinople for representative art of the pre-Ottoman age. Ravenna holds the finest mosaics of that period. These, from the church of S. Apollinare Nuovo, depicting martyred saints, give an admirable presentation of the style of court dress of the sixth century.

Photos, Alinari

only closed the land route but contrived to interfere with, if not to stop, the traffic via Ceylon, hence the manufacturers of the Empire were gravely embarrassed. In this crisis two monks who had been sent to China came to the rescue and succeeded in smuggling some eggs of the silk-worm concealed in a hollow tube. Mulberry trees were at once planted, and the cultivation of home-grown silk rapidly spread in southern Europe.

The economic condition of the population of Constantinople was probably not unprosperous. The nobles were immensely wealthy and lived in

**Economic condition of the population** luxury little if at all inferior to that of the great days of Rome.

In their splendid palaces the furniture gleamed with gold and ivory and to have two or three thousand slaves and attendants was by no means uncommon. The poorer classes probably fared better than at Rome. Free rations or corn were supplied each week to the indigent; free amusement was provided by the games in the Hippodrome; and charitable institutions of all kinds were provided by the care of the emperors and the piety of the Church. We read of orphanages and almshouses, asylums and hospitals; even free medical attendance is recorded. The slaves, still a numerous section of the population, were bought and sold like cattle; but even their lot had considerably improved; they were now protected against cruel treatment, and the Church had instituted a practice of liberating them.

But if the population of the capital had little cause for complaint, we must not forget that the lot of the country people was wretched in the extreme. Again and again some of the fairest provinces of Justinian's Empire were overrun by invaders and ruined—houses burnt, crops and plantations destroyed, and the wretched inhabitants driven away into slavery or massacred.

Even when the Empire was at peace, the taxation was so crushing that the vast majority of the population must have been kept permanently only just above the poverty line; and terrible as the taxation was, its evils were intensified by the

method of collection employed. The custom was to farm the taxes—to sell the taxation of a district in return for a sum of ready money to a collector, who then proceeded to recoup himself at the expense of the hapless ratepayers, often employing violence and torture to extort the last halfpenny. Justinian once abolished this system, but so pressing was his need for ready money that he soon returned to the old method. When we consider the architectural and military glory of his reign, it is as well to remember the other side of the picture (see further in Chap. 101).

Despite the military importance of the city, its inhabitants were completely unwarlike. The only troops recruited within the city were certain regiments of guards, who paid heavily for the privilege of wearing uniform and hence were regarded rather as a source of revenue than as a serious military force. During the Nika revolt and at all other emergencies they proved worse than useless.

The army nominally numbered about 600,000 men; it probably was always much undermanned and at the end of Justinian's reign was in a deplorable state, thanks to the financial distress of the Empire. The old Roman legions had degenerated into an inefficient frontier militia, and the armies with which Africa and Italy were conquered were composed partly of personal retainers

of the commander, partly **The Byzantine military system** of foreign soldiers of fortune. When properly led,

these undoubtedly were troops of excellent quality; nothing is so surprising as the small numbers of the imperial armies in the various wars; Belisarius conquered Africa with only 15,000 men and for the first Italian campaign had barely 8,000. The cavalry, clad entirely in scale armour, formed the principal arm; and the artillery, composed of machines for hurling stones and arrows, was quite effective; infantry played a minor part. On the other hand, these mercenaries were often difficult to control and, if left unpaid, as they often were, tended to plunder friends and foes alike.

Of the navy we hear little, but it commanded the seas effectively in all Justinian's campaigns. The ships of war

were galleys, long narrow vessels driven by oars, as in Roman days. In naval tactics a new weapon had been introduced, an elementary form of flame-thrower, which hurled pots of burning chemicals upon the enemy vessels; this is the 'Greek fire,' which in later centuries played a conspicuous part in the wars of the Empire.

Here a reference must be made to the historical problem of Justinian's reign. Our knowledge of events is derived from the writings of Procopius, a secretary on the staff of Belisarius in his early campaigns, and in his published works Belisarius is his hero, Justinian the wise and beneficent emperor. But Procopius left another work, the *Secret History*, which was not published till he was long dead; and this tells another tale.

It is a long and unsavoury story of palace intrigue, in which Belisarius appears as utterly duped by his wife Antonina, a woman of the most abandoned character; Justinian as a monster deliberately planning the overthrow of the Empire by his perfidious policy. But the most astonishing revelations deal with the empress

**Procopius' Secret  
History of the reign**

Theodora, who is described as the illegitimate child of an actress, at a time when to be an actress was to lead a life of open ignominy. She herself was bred for the stage, where she soon surpassed all her contemporaries in impudence and indecency. So bad was her reputation that to meet her in the street was considered a bad omen for the day. She went to Africa with an officer, who soon grew tired of her insolence and extravagance, and sent her back to Constantinople, where she was living in a state of poverty when she was seen by Justinian, then heir to the throne. Infatuated with her charms, he provided an establishment for her and eventually married her. Antonina was of even lower origin, and had several children by various fathers before she married Belisarius. It is by the intrigues of these two women that Procopius explains most of the events of the reign.

Obviously much of this must depend on hearsay evidence, but we must not conclude that the whole is the spiteful

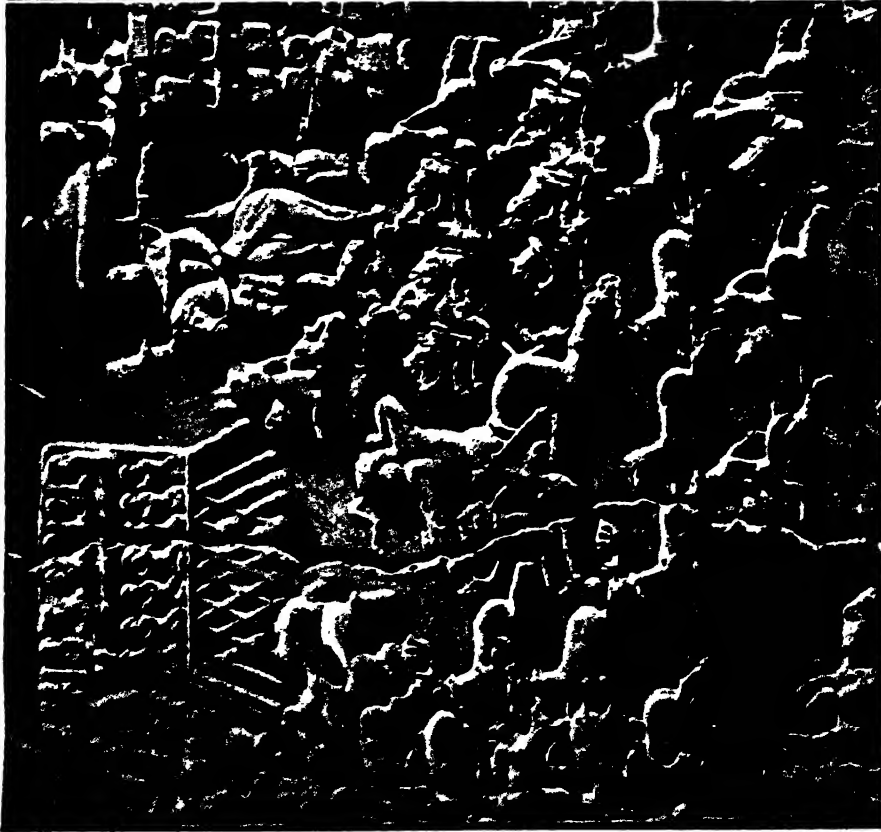
slander of a man disappointed, let us say, in his hopes of promotion. The strongest evidence against it is the admitted fact that Theodora's conduct after she became empress was irreproachable; but that the love of power should with the growing years overcome the love of pleasure is surely no uncommon phenomenon. After all, Justinian's reign did end in disaster and misery; and there is only too much evidence from other sources that the morals of the age were as bad as could be.

What is beyond doubt is that Theodora, while she lived, exercised no ordinary influence on her husband and on the policy of his govern-

ment. We have seen **Forceful character  
of Theodora**

her save his crown by her firmness at the Nika revolt; and there need be little hesitation in following Procopius in ascribing to her personal likes and dislikes many of the puzzling vicissitudes of the reign. She was far more feared than Justinian; when he would have spared the ringleaders of the Nika revolt, she had them led out and executed. Her spies were everywhere; if she was capable of impulsive kindness to her friends, she never forgot an injury in word or deed. In person she was short and slight, with dark hair and pale skin. While capable of fierce energy, her ordinary life was self-indulgent to a degree. The greater part of every day was spent in bed, or at the toilet. She loved the pomp of empire and never moved without a retinue of several thousand guards and attendants.

In these details of private life Justinian contrasts strongly with his consort. He allowed himself but few hours to sleep, preferred the simplest food and clothes and spent the day immersed in details of public business. In person he was of middle stature, bald and clean shaven, with a round reddish face. A parallel has often been drawn between him and Louis XIV, the 'Grand Monarque.' Both were well-meaning and conscientious rulers; both were much influenced by women and priests; both were magnificent builders; both began by a series of brilliant conquests and both ended by reducing their subjects to bankruptcy.



#### HUNTING IN THE GRAND MANNER AS PRACTISED BY CHOSROES II

Hunting was a favourite pastime of the Sassanid kings and, to judge from the reliefs in the Tak-i-Bustan near Kermanshah, was carried on with not a little ceremonial by Khusrü Parviz (Chosroes II). Thus in the stag hunt (left) the royal sportsman arrives on the scene attended by his umbrella bearer and musicians and then displays his skill and activity in slaughtering the game driven into the netted enclosure. In the boar hunt (right) the animals are driven into the water where the king awaits them in a boat, and here again musicians in boats emphasise the artificial character of the royal sport.

From *Friedrich Sarre*, 'Die Kunst des Alten Persien'

# RENAISSANCE OF PERSIAN POWER AND CULTURE

An Account of Life Manners and Thought in  
Persia during the glorious Period of the Sassanids

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Author of *History of Persia*, etc.

**I**N about A.D. 226 the Parthian Empire was overthrown by Ardashir, who slew Ardawan, the last Parthian monarch, in single combat. The victor claimed descent from the Achaemenian monarch Ardashir 'of the long hands' (better known as Artaxerxes II Longimanus), and established a national dynasty which was accepted with enthusiasm by his subjects, who acknowledged that its members possessed the Royal Splendour or Divine Right of Kings. He desired to restore the wide boundaries of Cyrus and Darius, and the pursuit of this policy involved hostilities with Rome, in which he was successful, gaining Armenia as the prize.

The Sassanid dynasty was no mere tribe of nomads, as the Parthians remained to the end. It was highly civilized, and, under its enlightened rule, Persia represented the East worthily in the arts of peace as well as in war. Indeed, European historians should realize the great influence of Persia on world history, and should cease to view its early relations with Europe through Greek spectacles. Persia also deeply influenced India and central Asia, and to-day her language is spoken by millions of Asiatics who have no political connexion with Iran.

Of predominant importance under the Sassanid monarchy was the national religion. It is recorded that Ardashir himself said: 'Consider the altar and the throne as inseparable; they must ever support one another.' The primitive Iranians (the word is almost identical with Aryan) worshipped the heavens, light, fire, the winds and the life-giving rain, whereas drought and darkness were accursed. The Heavens were pre-eminent

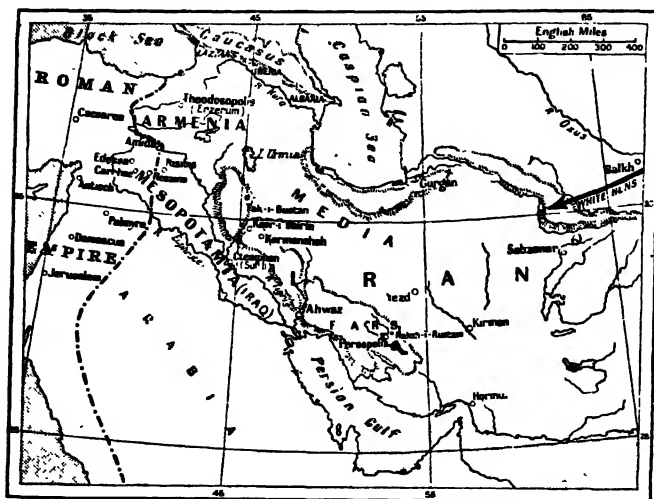
in this polytheistic system, the sun being termed 'Heaven's Eye' and the lightning 'Heaven's Son.' In this primitive religion the gods of light waged incessant war with those of darkness, and Man helped the former by prayers and sacrifices.

Zarathustra, better known as Zoroaster, was born in the vicinity of Lake Urmia, in north-western Persia, about the eighth century B.C. His youth was given up to meditation and prayer, and he finally proclaimed his mission. At first he made no converts and suffered bitter disappointments until, visiting eastern Persia, he won over the monarch Vishtasp, who was thenceforth the 'arm and support' of the new religion. The conversion of the monarch and his subjects was followed by desperate contests with the Turanian or nomad tribes, which culminated in a decisive victory for Vishtasp near Sabzawar.

The tenets of this new monotheistic religion have been described in Chapter 37. Of the Zoroastrian scriptures, termed the Avesta, but a part has come down to us. The oldest portion is represented by the Gathas, which contain the actual utterances of the Prophet, who preached morality so pure that it excites our profound reverence.

The three fundamental principles of Zoroastrianism are: first, that agriculture and the breeding of cattle are the only noble callings; second, that the whole creation is a combat between Good and Evil; third, that the elements air, water, fire and earth are pure and must not be defiled. The ideal life, as set forth by the Prophet, 'is where the faithful erects a house with cattle, wife and children, and





THE SASSANID PERSIAN EMPIRE

Ardashir overthrew the Parthian Empire about 226 B C and then secured Armenia—a cause of permanent trouble with Rome. Pressure from the White Huns upon the east relieved the western tension in the fifth century, but later the Persians invaded Syria, took Antioch, held temporary possession of Lazica and even threatened Constantinople

where the cattle continue to thrive; where the dog, the wife, the children and the fire are thriving.' The third principle involved the sacredness of fire, and was recognized by the priest covering his mouth when tending the sacred flame and in other ways. It also led to rules against the defilement of running water, which are still observed in Mahomedan Persia. Finally, the dead were exposed on towers, to prevent the pollution of the earth.

As the centuries passed, however, the monotheism preached by Zoroaster was forsaken and a return was made to the old polytheism. The attributes of Ahura-mazda became the 'Immortal Holy Ones' and were worshipped. The cult of Mithras, the sun god, later the protector of monarchs and the god of victory, led to Mithraism, which was adopted as the state religion of Rome by Diocletian and his two successors and spread to distant York and Chester (see also Chap. 74).

To return to Ardashir, the story runs that, in order to ensure unity of teaching, a 'mobed' of noted sanctity was chosen who, after undergoing elaborate ablutions, was given an opiate, under the influence of which he slept for seven days. Upon awaking, he dictated the entire faith of Ahura-mazda, or Ormuzd as at this period

the god is usually called, and this was accepted as authoritative by priests and people. It is difficult to take the legend literally, but it clearly points to a careful revision of the Avesta, so far as it had been preserved in script and in the memory of the 'mobeds.' Under the Sassanid dynasty ecclesiastical influence was very powerful. Like the monks of medieval Europe, the priests alone were educated. They also possessed enormous properties. As may be supposed, they were fanatical and intolerant, and instigated persecutions of the Christians.

After the downfall of the Persian Empire in the seventh century the Arab conquerors persecuted the followers of Zoroaster; to-day there are

only some ten thousand adherents of the old religion still living in Persia, mainly at Yezd and Kirman, a remnant of much larger numbers in comparatively recent times. The best known of the followers of Zoroaster are the Parsees (Persians) of Bombay, who migrated from their homeland to India after the Arab conquest. Although only one hundred thousand strong, they constitute a rich and progressive community. They still follow the tenets of their ancient religion, albeit reforms have been effected in the primitive customs, according to which the sick and dying were neglected. Indeed, hospitals are supported most generously by this enlightened community.

**Modern followers  
of Zoroaster**

Under the Sassanid dynasty a new religion arose that has deeply influenced mankind. Its founder, Mani, was born in A.D. 215 and at an early age proclaimed his mission. For some years his influence was great, but, falling from favour, he undertook long journeys, during the course of which he visited India, Tibet, Turkistan and China. He returned to Persia after the death of Shapur I and was received with much favour by his successor, Hormisdas, who, however, only reigned for a year. Bahram I, upon ascending the

throne, put Mani to death and his skin, stuffed with straw, was hung up over the city gate. (See also page 2333.)

Mani taught that everything was evil in an evil world and he consequently denounced marriage and the propagation of the human race. As in Zoroastrianism, the Light was set against the Darkness but, according to Mani, both were evil, and he preached a final conflagration which would mark the redemption of Light and its final dissociation from the irredeemable Darkness. Mani was famous for the pictures with which he illustrated his works. Like the monks, he grasped the appeal they made to mankind.

The sect did not die with its prophet, whose conceptions are discussed in Chapter 88. It flourished widely, and manuscripts dealing with this pessimistic creed have recently been discovered in central Asia. It also spread along the northern coast of Africa, where S. Augustine of Hippo professed it before embracing Christianity. In Europe its converts numbered many thousands. So serious was the heresy considered that, in 1209, Simon de Montfort led a crusade against the Albigenses, who had adopted it.

Throughout the four centuries of their rule the Sassanid monarchs waged war with the Roman Empire. Their most brilliant success was the capture of the emperor Valerian (died A.D. 260) by Shapur (Sapor) I (page 2118), a feat of arms that resounded like a thunder-clap through Europe and Asia. But, on the whole, Rome was stronger and certainly better organized. Carus, in 283, captured Ctesiphon; and Diocletian, in 297, advanced the frontier from the Euphrates to the



#### PERSIA'S GREATEST PARTHIAN KING

China's earliest overtures to Persia were made in 120 B.C., when the Parthian Mithradates II received a Chinese mission. He was also the first Persian king to enter into negotiations with Rome—through Sulla, then praetor of Cilicia.

*British Museum*

Tigris and carefully administered the five new provinces. Incidentally he not only made Mithraism the state religion, but adopted the procedure of the Persian court, which thus served as the model for Europe. The disastrous expedition of Julian in 363 resulted in the frontier being pushed back to the Euphrates, but Armenia never ceased to be a bone of contention between the two powers. There was, however, peace for sixty years between the two empires in the fifth century, Persia being busily occupied in the defence of her eastern provinces against the White Huns.

China has ever loomed large in the eyes of Persia, as her literature proves. The earliest attempt to open up intercourse with Persia was made by the Han dynasty, whose mission was received by the Parthian monarch Mithradates II in 120 B.C. A generation later Pan Ch'ao (page 2107), whose name is still remembered at Kashgar, dispatched an envoy to Parthia. The object of the astute Chinese was to open up direct relations and trade in silk with the Roman Empire. In this, as we have seen in Chapter 70, he was not successful, but in the report of the mission it was stated that 'they of Ta Ts'in (Rome) trade with An-sih (Parthia) and Tien Chu (India) in the middle of the sea, making tenfold profits. The Roman King always wished to send missions to Han, but Parthia wished to trade with them in Han silks, so that he was obstructed':

The capital Suh-li (Ctesiphon) has over 100,000 households. The land is fairly level, the climate is very hot, and they keep ice in their houses. Their five cereals, birds and



#### IRANIAN ART IN CHINA

Numerous plaques for belts and horse trappings found in Chinese graves of the Han Dynasty testify to intercourse between China and Persia at that period. This specimen reproduces a common Sarmatian design of a dead horse.

*Metropolitan Museum New York*

beasts are pretty much as in China. There is a bird shaped like a camel, having two wings which enable it to fly along the ground, but not to rise. It eats grass and flesh and can also swallow fire.

It is interesting to note that Persians still term the ostrich the camel-bird.

A vivid description of the king sitting on his gold lion throne and wearing his splendid crown, of his courtiers and their dress, of their titles and of the stately ceremonies, completes a very interesting account, in which even the name of the reigning monarch is given. The last embassy was despatched by Noshirwan; it was during his reign that Persian monks brought to Justinian a consignment of silkworms hidden in a bamboo staff (see Chap. 85).

The intercourse between China and Persia resulted in the exchange of products and ideas. Thus we learn that the Chinese organized heavy cavalry on the Parthian model. In later days Persia imported Chinese porcelain, while it appears that cobalt blue reached China from Persia.

No account of this period would be complete without some reference to Christianity under the Sassanid dynasty. The

Christian religion undoubtedly reached Persia and Armenia very early indeed; but unfortunately, as in modern Turkey, there existed political complications which tended to hinder its spread. Constantine, with questionable statesmanship, wrote to Shapur II: 'You can imagine how delighted I am to hear that Persia is adorned by the Christians, on whose behalf I write to you.' This tactless assumption of a protecting interest by the ruler of the rival empire, which had adopted Christianity as its state religion, was bitterly resented, as it was bound to be. The Persian point of view was that Christian monks and nuns encouraged a pernicious practice by retraining from the procreation of children, and that all Christians defiled the earth by burials and the water by ablutions, and refused to hold fire sacred. When, in addition, it was realized that they were disloyal subjects of the King of Kings, persecutions started, which culminated in the martyrdom of the Catholicus, five bishops and one hundred priests in 339.

Sixty years later Yezdigird I showed favour to the Christians, being influenced in their favour by the medical skill of a



#### IRANIAN INFLUENCE ON CHINESE MILITARY ORGANIZATION

The Sarmatians, a nomad tribe of Iranian affinities, had developed such efficient cavalry tactics that they affected even the composition, armament and equipment of the Roman army, with which they came in direct conflict in the Danube provinces; indirectly, through the Huns who borrowed freely from them, their influence also reached China, whose kings of the Han Dynasty remodelled the whole military organization of China on Iranian lines. The Chinese heavy cavalryman (left) in particular was armed and equipped exactly like the Parthian cavalryman (right).

*British Museum, and State Museum, Berlin*

bishop, who had cured him of a malady and thereby gained considerable influence over him. In 409 a 'farman' was issued permitting Christians to worship openly and to rebuild their churches, this decree being as important to the Persian church as was the Edict of Milan to Christians in Europe. Yezdigird at one time even contemplated baptism and showed hostility to the state religion, with the result that he has gone down to history with the opprobrious title of 'the Wicked.' Late in his reign he realized that he had gone too far and, reversing his policy, he ordered the destruction of the Christian sect, which suffered another terrible persecution.

Under his successor, Bahram Gur, thousands of Christians fled across the Roman frontier. The Persian monarch demanded their surrender, which was refused; but as he was defeated in the hostilities that followed, he agreed to leave his Christian subjects unmolested. They, on their part, at the Council of Dad-Ishu held in 424, declared the independence of the Eastern church and thereby removed one of the chief causes of the trouble. A generation later the Persian church broke away from the monophysite church of Constantinople and adopted the doctrine of the 'two natures in God'; and, after taking this step, Christians were generally treated with tolerance. At the end of the fifth century the emperor Zeno closed the college at Edessa on account of its heretical teaching. Re-established across the frontier at Nisibis, it taught Greek learning to the Arabs (see Chap. 97), through whose instrumentality it reached benighted Europe in medieval times.

During the reign of Justin there was a revival in the Byzantine Empire of belief in the conception of the 'two natures in God.' This might have led to fresh persecutions in Persia, especially as it coincided with the rebellion of one of King Noshir-



BAHRAM GUR—' THAT GREAT HUNTER '

Bahram V succeeded his father Yezdigird I in 420 and in his twenty years' reign waged an unsuccessful war with Rome, which, however, he concluded on honourable terms; he pacified Armenia and defeated the White Huns. His favourite quarry in the hunt was the wild ass, the 'gur' that became his sobriquet.

*British Museum*

wan's sons, who was a Christian. However, the patriarch was able to clear himself, and Noshirwan was just.

Khusru Parviz married a Christian, the celebrated beauty Shirin, and was generally favourable to Christianity. Indeed he insisted on the aged patriarch accompanying him on his earlier campaigns, to gain the benefit of his prayers, and letters are still extant which prove how strongly the Great King was influenced by a Christian saint. His sack of Jerusalem, however, and his capture of the true Cross moved Christendom more than any massacre of Christians under the earlier Sassanid monarchs had done.

Persia attained her zenith of power and culture under Noshirwan, the Chosroes I of European writers, who ascended the throne in 531. For Persians he remains for all time their most illustrious monarch. The favourite son of Kobad, he asserted his claims to the throne in the usual Oriental manner, by putting to death all his brothers and their male offspring, thereby removing the risk of civil war.

It is interesting to note that Noshirwan, whose fame rests partly on his military exploits, began his reign by making peace with Justinian. But the latter, excellently served by his great general Belisarius, reconquered North Africa and Italy, with the result that Noshirwan, fearing to be attacked by overwhelming forces, suddenly invaded Syria. Justinian was entirely unprepared and Antioch, with all its wealth, constituted a rich prize. A temporary peace was patched up, but Justinian denounced it when his military preparations were complete, and the two empires engaged in war for many years.

Noshirwan decided to attack the Romans in Lazica, the modern Mingrelia, hoping to launch a fleet on the Black Sea and thereby threaten Constantinople. This was a fantastic scheme, and when he realized that no decisive results were attainable, peace was again concluded, Lazica being restored to Justinian in return, for an annual payment, which Noshirwan probably represented to his subjects as tribute. He then engaged in a series of campaigns against the White Huns and in alliance with the Turks, who had recently appeared on the scene, crushed them and divided their territory with the 'ilkhan' of the Turks, whose daughter he married.

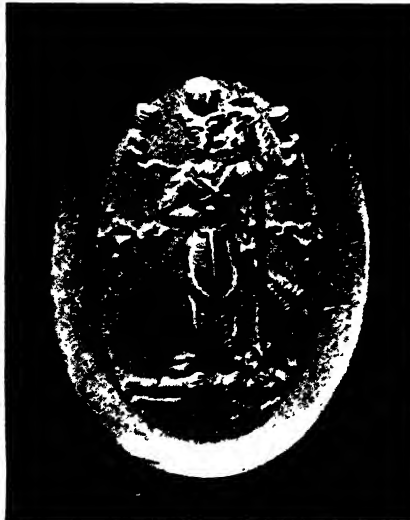
The military fame of Noshirwan rests mainly on these campaigns, of which we unfortunately possess no detailed account. We know, however, that they added greatly to the power and fame of the Persian monarch; for Justin, who had succeeded to the throne of the Eastern Empire, broke the peace in 572, for exactly those reasons that had prompted Noshirwan to do the same some thirty years previously. Consequently for the rest of the reign of Noshirwan there was war between the two empires, which

inflicted serious loss on one another while neither of them gained any decisive advantage.

We may now turn to the internal affairs of Persia. The monarch was the main-spring of the government, and the character of Noshirwan merits study. In all his acts he appears to have displayed both strength and justice, which is what Orientals, who rightly despise weakness in their rulers, most admire. Upon ascending the throne he found that Persia was suffering from insecurity, corruption, oppression and obsolete laws, and he determined to remedy this state of affairs.

The greatest of his reforms was a land settlement, which was based on that of the Roman Empire under the Lex Julia (Julian Law). The old custom had been for the state to take a proportion of all produce, ranging from one-tenth to one-half, according to the fertility of the land. This system worked badly owing to the exactions of the tax collector, and not only discouraged the cultivator, but caused much waste. Of this an instance is given in a story that has come down to us: it tells how Noshirwan saw a child being beaten by its mother for picking a bunch of grapes, which the woman immediately tied to the vine. In reply to a question she said that, until the king's share had been collected, the growers dared not eat their grapes.

Noshirwan substituted a fixed payment in money and in kind for each plot of sown land. There were, in addition, taxes on fruit trees and houses and a poll-tax. These taxes were never raised, and the cultivator was encouraged in every way to till more land. Noshirwan constantly increased the supply of irrigation water, on



**VICTORIOUS MAJESTY**

No name is engraved upon this gem, but the mural crown surmounted by a globe, necklet and flying ribbons proclaim this victor trampling a fallen foe to be a Sassanid king.

British Museum

which the crops mainly depended, by the construction of dams and by adding to the number of 'kanats,' or underground water channels. He also augmented the population by insisting that every man should marry, by dowering the poor, by making advances of seed and cattle to the peasants and by settling bodies of captives on the land, where they were well treated. He improved communications, building bridges and cutting roads; while brigandage was put down with a firm hand. Similarly merchants were encouraged to increase their business by this far-sighted ruler. It is of interest to note that Akbar, the great Mogul emperor of India, based his land reforms on the settlement of Noshirwan.

Noshirwan effected as great reforms in the administration of justice as in his land settlement. By his orders the laws

of Ardashir were copied and declared to be the supreme law of the land, thereby regularising the system. Punishments were terribly severe,

**Land and Law Reform** as indeed was the case all over the world, until the last

century. On the other hand Noshirwan was imbued with a passion for justice and strove ceaselessly to prevent acts of injustice and oppression; in his decisions there are distinct indications that mercy was shown to the young. A typical story recounts that an ambassador inquired why the square in front of the royal palace was irregular in shape. The reply was, that an old woman owned the adjacent land, which she refused to sell at any price, and that Noshirwan would not force her to do so.

The devotion to learning of this great monarch was intense. He founded a famous university at Jundeshapur, where philosophy and medicine were extensively studied, and he made great efforts to educate the upper classes. He welcomed



#### WOMEN'S SOCIAL FREEDOM IN PERSIA

This fifth century silver dish furnishes a naïvely pleasant picture of domestic happiness in the Sassanian court, and indicates that the position of women was relatively good then. The king, Yezdigird II or perhaps Balas, is presenting his consort with a necklet, smiling the while at her wide-eyed delight.

*Kunsthandel, Berlin; from Sarre, 'Kunst des Alten Persien'*

men of learning at his court, among them seven Greek neo-Platonists, who had been expelled by Justinian. They taught philosophy in Persia and undoubtedly deeply influenced Persian mysticism.

By the orders of Noshirwan a 'Book of the Kings' was written, on which Firdausi's great epic, the *Shahnama*, was based; the Fables of Pilpay were also translated and chess was introduced from India. At this glorious period, indeed, Persia was the central mart for the exchange not only of commodities, but also of ideas.

The splendour and luxury of the Sassanid dynasty have become proverbial. The bas-reliefs have preserved for us a faithful representation of the rich arms and horse trappings of the King of Kings, while even the presence of musicians when he shot game is shown on the rock sculptures. In the throne room the wonderful carpet representing a garden—the ground wrought in gold, the paths in silver; meadows of emeralds and rivulets of pearls; trees, flowers and fruits of diamonds, rubies and other precious stones—



#### ELEPHANTS FOR HUNTING GAME

The Persians made large use of elephants, both in war and in sport. This portion of the relief on one of the arches at Tak-i-Bustan, which commemorate the reign of Khusru Parviz, shows elephants ridden by beaters driving the quarry—wild boars in this instance—towards the hunters.

*From Friedrich Sarre, 'Die Kunst des Alten Persien'*

formed a fit setting for the great golden lion throne, for the priceless crown which, owing to its weight, was suspended by a chain of gold, and for the dazzling figure of the divine monarch, clad in cloth of gold, blazing with jewels. So great was the effect that his subjects were ready to fall prostrate and adore.

The chief pastime of the kings was the chase, and hawking was much practised. The game of polo was very popular, and there are frequent references to it. Among the earliest is the statement that Ardashir, the founder of the dynasty, was summoned by Ardawan to his court and accompanied his sons to the chase and to the polo ground.

The luxury of the dynasty reached its highest pitch under Khusru Parviz (Chosroes II), who is stated to have kept twelve thousand women in his harem. Under Noshirwan it is unlikely that money was wasted in this spendthrift fashion, which was one of the chief causes

of the decline and fall of the dynasty.

The position of women was relatively good under the Sassanids. They took a larger part in affairs and were less secluded than under the austere rule of Islam. The legend has even come down to us that beautiful Shirin and her ladies played polo. Nizami wrote :

When they reached the polo ground, the maidens galloped their horses with delight. They started play, when every Moon appeared a Sun, and every Partridge a Hawk. Now Shirin won and now the Shah.

We also read of Shirin founding churches and monasteries and generally asserting herself in state affairs.

Under Noshirwan the Persian army became a formidable fighting force. It chiefly relied on its heavy cavalry, the prototype of the knightly array of medieval Europe. Clad in coats of mail and armed with lance, sword and bow, it was almost irresistible.

Light cavalry was supplied by the despised Arabs. The archers, like the bowmen of England, constituted the most important part of the infantry and were supported by swordsmen and spearmen, but they were neither so well trained nor so efficient as the Roman infantry. This was partly due to the fact that Persia, a land of great distances, is more suitable for mounted troops than for infantry. Elephants, which were generally kept in reserve, were used with considerable effect on the field of battle.

The Sassanid dynasty studied the art of besieging cities and developed siege trains, which included battering rams and ballistae. The usual procedure was to advance by means of trenches to the ditch of a fortress, which was filled up with earth and fascines. Battering rams were then brought up, a breach was effected and an assault was delivered. There is every reason to suppose that the Sassanids

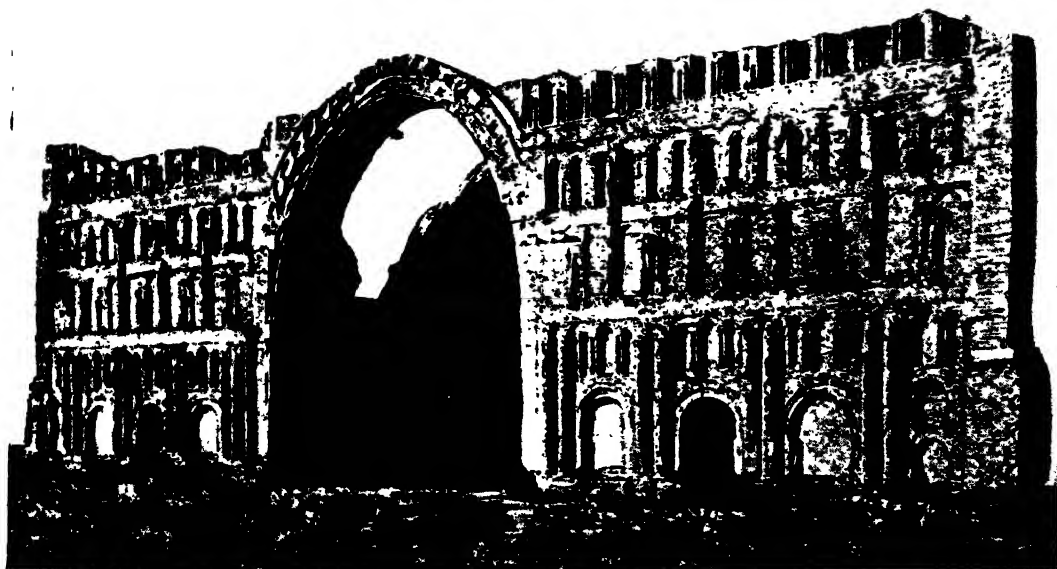
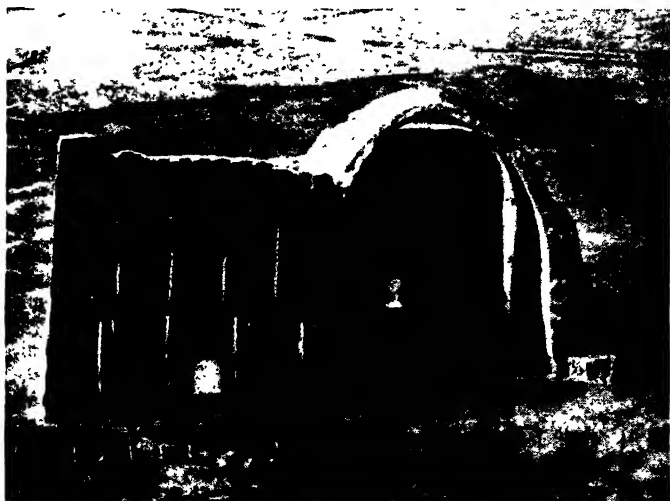


learned much from the Romans in the arts of war; while we know that the latter equipped their heavy cavalry on the Persian model.

Noshirwan organized a standing army and worked incessantly for efficiency. He constantly inspected men and horses and weeded out the unfit. An enlightening anecdote describes how, when Noshirwan appointed a paymaster-general, that official summoned the Great King himself to appear on parade and draw his pay. The monarch duly rode on to the parade ground, was carefully inspected and, being found to be deficient in the two extra bow-strings that formed part of a mounted officer's equipment, was ordered to return to the palace and repair the deficiency. He obeyed and, upon being finally passed, drew his pay.

History testifies as to the efficiency of the Persian army under Noshirwan; and under Khusrü Parviz it all but over-

threw the Byzantine Empire. Indeed, Heraclius had actually prepared to flee from Constantinople to Africa, but the people, headed by the patriarch, forced him to swear that he would not desert his capital. An impression of the Persian army may be had from Ammianus Marcellinus, the Roman soldier and historian, who actually took part in the campaigns of Julian the Apostate in Mesopotamia two and a half centuries before:



#### CRUMBLING RELIC OF A MASTERPIECE OF SASSANIAN ARCHITECTURE

Ctesiphon, capital of the former Parthian Empire, was maintained as the capital of the Sassanid dynasty and reached the zenith of its splendour under Chosroes I who built the White Palace that was its greatest glory. Of this vast structure only the so-called Arch of Ctesiphon—actually the remains of the vaulted Hall of Audience—remains, and that, too, is crumbling rapidly, as may be seen by comparing this photograph taken in 1864 with the air view above taken sixty years later.

*Upper photo, Air Force Official, Crown Copyright; lower, from Dieulafoy, 'L'art antique en Perse'*





**DIVINE SANCTION FOR THE DYNASTY**

The most famous examples of Sassanian art are the bas-reliefs at Naksh-i-Rustam, recording the triumphs of Sassanian kings. This, the earliest, depicts the god Ormuzd, mounted and holding a sceptre, presenting the cydaris or royal circlet to Ardashir beneath whose horse's hoofs the last Parthian monarch grovels

*From Sarre and Herzfeld, 'Iranische Felsrelief'*

At daybreak the country, as far as we could see, glittered with shining arms, and cavalry in armour filled the plains and hills. And Shapur himself, mounted on his charger, and being taller than the rest, led his army, wearing, instead of a crown, a golden figure of a ram's head inlaid with jewels; being also splendid because of the retinue of men of high rank and of different nations which followed him.

The architects of this period built many splendid palaces and public works. Unfortunately, the material was inferior, consisting mainly of boulders and stones covered with plaster, while the columns were made of bricks plastered with the same substance. Consequently there is but little left for the student to admire, less indeed than in the buildings of the far older Achaemenian dynasty, when great blocks of limestone were used. At the same time, from the ruins which remain in Mesopotamia and south-western Persia, it is possible to reconstruct in plan the typical palaces of the Sassanids. They were built in oblong rectangles, with a superb arched Hall of Audience as the culminating feature in the centre, a feature which is still retained in Persia both in public and private buildings. Behind the great hall was a series of courts surrounded

by square rooms, opening one into another. The rooms were vaulted, this form being necessitated by the absence of timber; and possessed the great drawback of limiting buildings to a single storey. Decoration was carried out by means of arched recesses, cornices and pilasters, as in the buildings of the Parthian dynasty.

The celebrated Aywan-i-Kisra, or 'Arch of Chosroes,' at Ctesiphon has excited the admiration of generations of travellers approaching Bagdad up the Tigris. To-day there remains but a fragment of the superb vaulted Hall of Audience, which has a span of 85 feet. In it for generations the Great King, seated on his throne, presided over stately ceremonies at which the at-

tendance was numbered by hundreds if not by thousands. It is not surprising that the Aywan-i-Kisra was regarded by the Arabs as the symbol of the power of the Great King, and its capture by the Moslem forces in A.D. 637 (see Chronicle XV) was celebrated by the words: 'Now hath the Lord fulfilled the promise which he made unto his Prophet.'

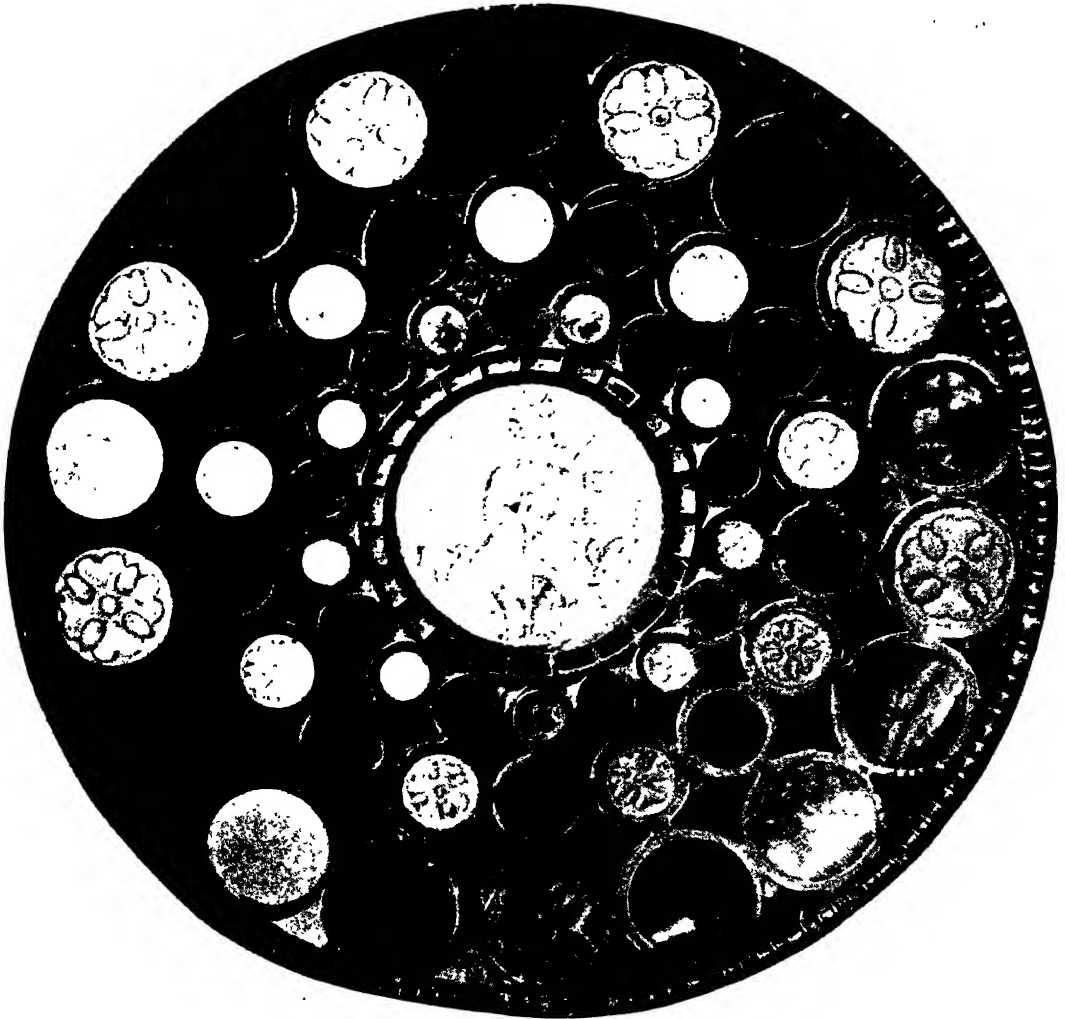
At Kasr-i-Shirin, just across the modern Persian frontier from Irak, are the ruins of another palace. It was built on similar lines and was set in a walled park looking across a lake. Only the roots of palm trees and pomegranates are now visible, but the Arabs of the period waxed lyrical over the beauty of the gardens and the number of rare animals that roamed among them.

The most famous examples of Sassanian art are to be found chiselled under the rock tombs of the Achaemenians at Persepolis. These bas-reliefs, seven in number, start with two equestrian figures of somewhat archaic art, representing the god Ormuzd handing to Ardashir the 'cydaris' or royal circlet. The most important group is the central one. It depicts, in a panel 36 feet long by 16 feet high, the capture of the Roman emperor Valerian by Shapur (Sapor) I. The central figure of

more than human stature is Shapur, wearing a mural crown surmounted by a globe; he is mounted on a powerful charger, and is receiving a plea for mercy from the manacled Valerian, whose arms are raised in supplication (see page 2117). The standing figure is that of Cyriadis, a citizen of Antioch, on whom Shapur, who pays no attention to Valerian, is apparently conferring the cydaris. At any rate we know that, to increase the difficulties of his enemies, he invested him with the royal purple and the title of Caesar.

In a garden (Tak-i-Bustan, the 'Garden of the Grotto') near Kermanshah bas-reliefs of the time of Khusru Parviz represent a stag hunt and also a boar hunt. Elephants drive the quarry, and the monarch is portrayed as shooting from horseback at the stags; in the case of the boar hunt, he stands in a boat (page 2306.) Altogether these varied bas-reliefs, which are the supreme expression of Sassanian art, afford much interesting study.

In this period fine goldsmith's work—cameos, intaglios and coins—was also



#### MASTERPIECE OF THE SASSANIAN GOLDSMITH'S ART

The finest extant specimen of Sassanian metal work is this 'cup of Chosroes.' The frame is of hammered gold and three rows of rosettes of crystal and red and green glass are inlaid; in the centre, a large medallion of rock crystal bearing a portrait of Chosroes II, crowned and enthroned. Incidentally this cup gives a good idea of what the Teutonic basket-like gold vessel shown in page 2222 must have looked like when its inlay was still intact.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris: photo, Giraudon*

produced. The famous 'cup of Chosroes' is a marvellous piece of openwork inlay. The frame is composed of a network of hammered gold, in which are inserted medallions of crystal and of green or red glass. In the centre is a large medallion of rock crystal, cut in relief to represent Khusru Parviz. According to an ancient tradition this priceless cup, which for many centuries was known as the Cup of Solomon, was presented to Charlemagne by Haroun al-Raschid. It is interesting to note that the Goths learned to make this inlaid work from the Iranian inhabitants of South Russia (see page 2222), and transmitted the art to western Europe, with the result that the Saxons produced good specimens of it in Kent in the seventh century—so widespread was the influence of Persian art.

There is also a famous sardonyx cameo which represents Shapur charging Valerian and making him prisoner by seizing his left arm (see page 2116). The artist has reproduced the galloping horses with consummate skill, while the dress and

existed for over twelve hundred years; but during the latter half of this period its use was almost entirely confined to the copying of ancient works. An amazing peculiarity of the language is that, owing to the very strong element of Aramaic words, what was read was entirely different from what was written. To give an example, in writing the title 'King of Kings' the Aramaic 'Malkan-Malka' was used, whereas 'Shahan-Shah' was read and spoken. This extraordinary procedure was only possible in the case of a nation which treated groups of letters as ideograms; but, even so, it led to the formation of monstrous hybrid words, half Aramaic, half Persian, and was utterly unpractical.

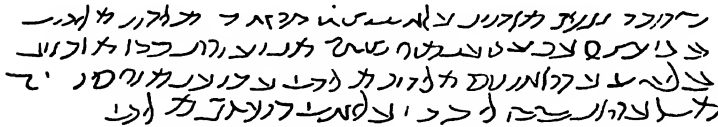
It may be asked what is the relation between Pahlavi and modern Persian. The reply is that it is as intelligible to an educated Persian as Chaucer is to an educated Englishman. Pahlavi inscriptions date back to the first two monarchs of

the illustrious Sassanid dynasty; and the latest that is known is an inscription cut by Parsees who visited Buddhist caves near Bombay in A.D. 1021.

Pahlavi literature mainly consists of translations of the Avesta or of religious works. Among the best known is a

Zoroastrian Paradiso and Inferno, in which the analogy between the Bridge of Tsinvat (see page 1130) and the Moslem Bridge of Sirat, 'finer than a hair and sharper than a sword,' is very close, while the houris of the Prophet also seem to find their more spiritual prototype in the fair white-armed maiden who welcomed the righteous on the farther side of the Bridge of Tsinvat.

Of non-religious works only eleven books have come down to us, including The Deeds of Ardashir, The Tale of Noshirwan and his Page, and The Social Code of the Zoroastrians. Most unfortunately, no poems have been spared to us, and this is probably a great loss.



#### SPECIMEN OF THE PAHLAVI SCRIPT OF PERSIA

Pahlavi inscriptions cover a period of about 800 years from the foundation of the Sassanian Empire (c. A.D. 226). The cursive script is of Semitic origin and in it many Aramaic words are employed which are read as their Persian equivalents. The characters are ambiguous, lending themselves to many readings.

*From Sykes, History of Persia*

equipment of the two monarchs are reproduced with fidelity.

The language of Persia during the Sassanid period was termed Pahlavi. The word, a form of 'Parthian,' is understood by Persians to signify the language of the Pahlavans, the heroes of ancient days, or, more generally, archaic Persian. To prove the esteem in which the word is held, the able soldier who overthrew the Kajar dynasty in October, 1925, crowned himself as Shah Riza, Pahlavi. Furthermore, he ordered that the name of the chief port on the Caspian Sea should be changed from Enzeli to Pahlavi.

The language can be traced back to coins of the third century B.C. and it

# THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH: A STUDY IN CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

How Christianity was upheld and the Traditions of Latin Literature carried on in the Patristic Writings

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WHILE the Roman Empire amid the anarchy and military revolutions of the third century A.D. was gradually falling into decay, the Christian Church, in spite of trials and persecutions, was slowly but surely growing in power, in number of adherents and in organization. By the year 300 it had definitely beaten the rival cults of Isis and Mithras and had spread to every country in the Mediterranean world (as shown in Chapter 80), so that from the extreme West in Britain to the distant East beyond the Euphrates there was a network of churches. Eighty-seven bishops from the provinces of Africa, Numidia and Mauretania attended Cyprian's council in 256; nineteen bishops were present at the Spanish council of Elvira in 306; in Gaul, in North Italy, on the Danube and on the Black Sea Christian communities were vigorous and flourishing, and, though still everywhere a minority of the population, were a minority whose influence was far greater than its numbers warranted.

They forced themselves into notice, for they openly defied all Roman principles of order and discipline; and when Diocletian had completed his great work of reorganizing the Empire he was almost compelled to undertake the chastisement of a sect that refused to acknowledge his divinity, evaded service in his army and would not offer sacrifice in his name. The Great Persecution began on February 23, 303, with the burning of the church at Nicomedia and it raged with more or less fury for eight years. At the end of that period its chief instigator, Galerius, lay dying; Diocletian had gone into retirement at Salonica; and in 313 Constan-

tine and Licinius by the Edict of Milan established the principle that every man was entitled to choose his own religion and to practise it in his own way.

The Edict of Milan closes the first period of the history of the Christian Church, and it may not be out of place to mention here some of those writers who in this first period established the tradition of patristic literature whereof Augustine is the most brilliant representative. First in time and first in importance comes Tertullian, born in Carthage of a pagan family about the year 150. Endowed with an intellect fundamentally positive, deeply attached to his own private judgements and fervently anxious to win over the souls of his fellow men and women to his beliefs, combative, passionate and filled with a fiery enthusiasm, Tertullian is one of the greatest minds and one of the greatest writers in Latin literature. The catalogue of the works, genuine and doubtful, attributed to him is a very long one, and while the *Apologeticus* stands out as 'one of those books which survive the circumstances that gave them birth and enter into the common treasury of civilized nations,' yet there is scarcely one of his treatises that lacks vivid interest. His controversy with Marcion is a mine of theological information, and from the multitude of his shorter essays a fairly complete manual of Christian morality can be extracted.

Tertullian by the force of his genius overshadows the other Latin apologists of the third century. But Minucius Felix, Cyprian and Arnobius deserve a brief notice. Minucius is the author of the

First period of  
Patristic Literature

Octavius, 'that pearl of apologetic literature,' as Renan calls it: a dialogue, possessed of abundant charm but somewhat lacking in distinctively Christian feeling, in which a young Christian by force of argument converts a pagan friend from the error of his ways. Cyprian, on the other hand, bishop and martyr, A.D. 258, is much greater as a man than as a writer, and only redeems his want of literary skill by the power and truth of his religious teaching. His importance is chiefly doctrinal,

**Cyprian on Unity of Catholic Church** and in his treatise, *De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate*, he lays down once for all the great principle of the unity of the Catholic Church. Arnobius is a more complex and far less edifying character than Cyprian. Converted from paganism in his sixtieth year he wrote the *Adversus Nationes* as a pledge of his sincerity, and whether intentionally or not produced a book that is extremely disconcerting to modest minds. In dealing with the legends of pagan mythology he shrinks from nothing, and although his fierce satire is undoubtedly effective he can hardly be recommended for young readers.

With Lactantius, who was a pupil of Arnobius, we reach the fourth century and approach the point where, by a sudden reversal, Christianity ceased to be regarded as a vile superstition and became instead an official creed (an account of this change is contained in Chapter 80). The Great Persecution, if it did nothing else, at least revealed the strength of the Christian communities, and the new position foreshadowed for their religion by the Edict of Milan was soon confirmed and extended by Constantine. Just before the battle of the Mulvian Bridge, 312, which made him the master of the West, the emperor had a vision. He saw in the sky a bright cross with the words 'Hoc vince' ('By this token win') upon it, and was bidden by Christ to take the symbol for his standard and in its strength to conquer. He won the day, and in the next year published the Edict of Milan; then, whether from gratitude or policy, he decided to make Christianity the official religion of the

Empire. The Council of Arles in 315 and the Council of Nicaea in 325 were both held at his instigation, and before he died, a baptised Christian, in 337, the union of Church and State was accomplished.

The Holy Catholic Church one and indivisible came into existence; all other forms of belief save those which had her sanction ranked as heresies, and so was consummated 'one of those domestic revolutions which excite the most lively curiosity and afford the most valuable instruction. The victories of the civil policy of Constantine no longer influence the state of Europe; but a considerable portion of the globe still retains the impression which it received from the conversion of that monarch; and the ecclesiastical institutions of his reign are still connected, by an indissoluble chain, with the opinions, the passions, and the interests of the present generation.'

The change of attitude which government protection made inevitable is seen henceforward in most of the Fathers of the Church. Lactantius, 'the Christian Cicero,' author of the *Divine Institutions* and the *Deaths of the Persecutors*, has all the qualities of the courtier cleric familiar in English history; and Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, is perhaps even better known as an historian and imperial administrator than as an ecclesiastic. The calm, however, that might have been expected to follow on the cessation of persecution was far from being visible, and Christianity, which Constantine had fondly imagined would prove a useful instrument of empire, obstinately refused to fulfil any secular purpose.

In the interests of the state, as well as in the worldly interests of the Church, unity of belief was essential. But unity of belief was extremely difficult to obtain, and the century was distracted by a succession of controversies and heresies—Homousian, Homoiousian, Arianism, Donatism, Pelagianism, Manichaeism—which prevented men from seeing the barbarian clouds collecting thickly on every frontier. It soon became obvious that Christianity had brought not peace but strife, and the attempt, made by the

emperor Julian, to revive paganism was so far justified in that the old worship, in which no one seriously believed, was far more amenable to control than was a faith which seemed to its true votaries the one thing worth living for. Arianism, which proved eventually to be one of the chief obstacles to harmony between the Romans and the Teutons, was an especial cause of difference, and all the authority of Athanasius in the East and Hilary in the West was needed to uphold the validity of the Nicene Creed; but this needs no further elaboration since it is fully discussed in Chapter 88.

Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, is a good example of the statesman-prelate that these dogmatic conflicts produced. Damasus, the able and masterful bishop of Rome (366-384), is equally well known. With him the history of the Papacy may almost be said to begin, for it was in his time that the inheritance of Rome's imperial traditions, left vacant by the withdrawal of the secular government from its ancient seat, fell definitely into the bishop's hands (see Chap. 95). The pagan historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, de-

**Imperial splendour  
assumed by the Church**

scribes the furious conflicts (page 2197) that accompanied his election, when

one hundred and thirty-seven corpses were counted at the end of the day, and adds that the prize was well worth the effort, seeing that the revenues of the Roman see and the offerings of pious Roman ladies enabled the bishop to maintain an establishment equal to that of Caesar's. Like a Renaissance pope, Damasus was a generous patron of arts and letters; he was Jerome's correspondent and protector, and himself a writer of somewhat mediocre verse. He built the church of S. Lorenzo Within the City, which was adorned with all the splendour of gold and marble; he drained the waters of the Vatican hill into the channel still in use, and, above all, he first made the catacombs the spectacle that they are to-day.

It will be seen that the life of a Christian bishop in the fourth and fifth centuries was filled with a variety of interests, many of which had but little connexion with religion. A bishop, as Chateaubriand says,

in those days needed to be a diplomat, an orator, a skilled administrator; he had to rule men and serve as counsellor to princes. Not only did he baptise, receive confessions, preach, prescribe penances, issue anathemas and lift excommunications; he visited the sick, ministered to the dying, buried the dead and gave relief to widows and orphans.

He built churches, **Manifold functions  
of the early Bishops** founded hospitals, ransomed captives, ad-

ministered the revenues of the Church, adjudicated as justice of the peace in private suits, and arbitrated on the quarrels between the different cities. At the same time he wrote treatises on doctrinal theology, combated heresy and paganism, corresponded with churches and bishops, monks and hermits, and sat on innumerable councils and synods. Finally, he was in many cases called in by the emperor to advise on questions of foreign policy, and sent as ambassador to usurpers and foreign potentates.

There were some prelates, of course, like the saintly Martin of Tours, founder of Marmoutier, who devoted all their energies to missionary work, but upon the majority their position imposed an immense burden of secular duties. A bishop of commanding personality exercised enormous influence, and one of the most striking figures in the life of the fourth century is Ambrose, bishop of Milan.

Ambrose was born about 340, of a Christian family among whose members was counted at least one martyr, the virgin Sotheris, put to death in the Great Persecution under Diocletian. His father was praetorian prefect in Gaul, and when he died at Trèves his widow brought her three children to Rome. There the young Ambrose gained a post on the staff of the praetorian prefect of Italy, and, after a short period of subordinate service, was appointed 'consular' of the provinces of Liguria and Aemilia, and stationed at Milan. About a year after his arrival the episcopal chair in that city fell vacant by the death of the Arian bishop Auxentius, and as there was good reason to expect that the election of his successor would cause disturbances similar to those which had occurred in Rome between the

partisans of Ursinus and Damasus, Ambrose himself made an appearance at the church where the choice was to be made. He was admonishing the crowd to orderly behaviour, his biographer Paulinus tells us, 'when a child suddenly cried out "Ambrose Bishop!" The people caught up the words and the disputing between Arians and Catholics at once gave way to a marvellous and incredible unanimity.'

Ambrose at first was unwilling to take the bishopric, as being an honour too great for him; for the story shows plainly to what heights the Christian hierarchy had now risen, so that in

**Ambrose bishop against his will** Milan the bishop was a person of far greater importance than the civil governor. If the chief-constable of Windsor were appointed headmaster of Eton by popular acclamation he might be reluctant to accept, as Ambrose was reluctant, because he was conscious of his lack of experience; and he might say, as Ambrose said: 'You would have me begin to teach before I have begun to learn.' But he could hardly refuse, nor did Ambrose refuse, on the plea that he was being offered a post inferior to that which he already held.

That indeed was almost the only argument that Ambrose did not use. He ordered criminals to be brought to his tribunal and cruelly tortured, so that the people might see how stern and relentless he could be. He ordered women of bad character to be introduced into his private house, so that he might be proved a man of immoral life. When both devices failed and the people cried 'We will take responsibility and bear all your sins,' he fled into the country and hid in a lonely cottage. But his retreat was discovered and he was escorted back in triumph. At last he gave way, was baptised, and seven days later became bishop.

The appointment was approved by the emperor Valentinian, but fiercely resented by his empress Justina, who was an Arian devotee, and against her Ambrose soon found it necessary to use all his strength. In this struggle, as in most others, he was successful, and after Valentinian's death he gained such an ascendancy over his successor Gratian that the latter was ready

to follow his guidance in all matters. For example, Gratian had begun his reign by according permission to heretics to follow their religion without molestation. Under Ambrose's influence during the next year that permission was revoked, and a stern decree published forbidding all heretic assemblies. Even more important was Gratian's Law 'qui mos,' which enacted that all matters affecting religion in which clerics were litigants, as distinct from criminal cases (a distinction afterwards conveniently ignored), should not be tried by the civil courts but by the bishop of the diocese. This, the beginning of the process whereby the clergy were put above the civil law, was one of Ambrose's greatest triumphs.

His next victory was over the Arians. Two Illyrian bishops complained to the emperor that they had been denounced as heretics and petitioned

to be judged by a council of all the Catholic bishops both from the Eastern and the Western sees.

**His victory over Arians and Pagans**

Ambrose by this time was supreme in the West, and although he was deeply indebted to Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, he had no wish to see his authority questioned by the bishops of Constantinople and Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria. He therefore wrote for the young ruler a treatise on the true faith and induced him to leave the case to be judged by a council of the Western bishops alone. The synod met at Aquileia in 381, and after a debate which lasted from daybreak till one in the afternoon the eloquence of Ambrose prevailed and the two offending prelates were deposed from their office.

Having thus overcome the Arians, Ambrose turned next against the pagans. On his prompting Gratian had already refused to become Pontifex Maximus, and in 382 the emperor was persuaded to renew the struggle against the old religion which had been suspended during the eighteen years of Valentinian's reign. By an imperial edict the vestal virgins and the various colleges of priests were deprived of their revenues, which passed into the public treasury, and any further allocation of funds for their benefit was prohibited. Furthermore, an order was



issued removing from the Senate House the famous statue of Victory which Julian had replaced upon the altar where it had been set first by Augustus. The pagan senators regarded the statue as a precious memorial of the Roman past, and led by the orator Symmachus they addressed an appeal to Gratian. But although the emperor was inclined to yield, Ambrose was inflexible. As he proclaimed :

The emperor who shall be guilty of granting such a concession will find that the bishops will neither endure nor connive at his sin. If he enter a church he will either find no priest or one who will defy his authority. The Church will indignantly reject the gifts of one who has shared them with heathen temples. The altar disdains the offering of the man who has made gifts to images.

The final result was that the deputation was not even granted an interview.

Unfortunately Gratian was murdered in 383, and for some years Ambrose had a difficult course to steer. On the one side were the usurpers

**Difficulties amid conflicting powers** Maximus and the pagan Eugenius, whose soldiers threatened to stable their horses in Milan cathedral ; on the other the empress Justina, guardian of the young emperor Valentinian II ; and she demanded full liberty of worship for her Arian protégés. Twice imperial troops beleaguered Ambrose and his followers in the Portian Basilica for several days, the bishop meanwhile composing for his patient congregation the great hymns, 'Aeternæ rerum conditor,' 'Iam surgit hora' and 'Veni redemptor gentium' that still bear his name. But his troubles ended when Theodosius defeated and killed Maximus in 388, for with the new ruler he stepped almost at once into the same position as he had held with Gratian. Theodosius was an able and experienced monarch who had a great record of achievements in the East before he ever appeared in Italy ; but as he himself said, Ambrose soon showed him the difference between an emperor and a bishop.

The first occasion was at Milan. Theodosius, attending Ambrose's church, did not return after the offertory with the rest of the congregation to the nave, but remained in the sanctuary. Ambrose at

once, by the medium of his archdeacon, bade him withdraw from a part of the sacred edifice reserved for the clergy ; and Theodosius meekly acquiesced. The next time there was a more definite contest of wills. Some Christians in Mesopotamia, at the instigation of their bishop, had burned a Jewish synagogue, and Theodosius ordered that it should be rebuilt at the bishop's expense. Ambrose, jealous of any secular interference in religious matters, insisted that this order should be revoked, and when Theodosius hesitated he preached openly against him and threatened to refuse him the sacrament. The menace was too much for the emperor, and the order was recalled.

The third incident is one of the most famous events in history. The people of Thessalonica had murdered their governor, and Theodosius retaliated by a general **Emperor abased by Bishop** massacre of the population, in which at least seven thousand defenceless victims perished. Ambrose was horrified at the ruthless cruelty of such a vengeance and insisted in a private letter to the emperor that he must do penance before he could receive the sacrament again. According to one tradition, Theodosius attempted to enter the cathedral but Ambrose barred his way, and an ancient column still stands in Milan to-day marking the spot where bishop and emperor met. In any case, Theodosius was compelled finally to submit, and, removing the insignia of his rank, fell prostrate on the ground, repeating the penitential formula : 'My soul cleaveth to the dust ; quicken thou me according to thy word.' Not a century had passed since Diocletian had claimed divine honours from men ; now the ruler of the world consented publicly to abase himself at a bishop's command.

With an emperor so amenable to the authority of the Church, Ambrose had no great difficulty in crushing both Arianism and paganism once and for all. Before Theodosius died, in 395, two laws were passed and put into effect. One forbade heretics—and in the long list Arians came first—to gather together in private or in public for worship. The other definitely banned the ancient rites of paganism :

'Nullus omnino'—'Let no man of any sort sacrifice to senseless images.' In 397, two years after Theodosius, Ambrose himself passed peacefully away, happy in the knowledge that the victory of Catholicism was secure. The penance of Theodosius was indeed the turning point, the end of the old world and the beginning of the new.

It has seemed advisable to narrate the life of Ambrose in some detail, for he is the first and greatest of Italian prelates, the supreme type of those bishop-diplomats who, in striving for the spiritual, established the temporal power of the Church. He was a great preacher and a great poet; but he was also a man of action and an ardent Roman patriot, dreaming of a Christian empire that should extend over the whole world, and it may be counted part of his good fortune that he died twelve years before Rome was taken and sacked by Alaric the Goth. The work, however, that he initiated went on. His younger contemporaries, Jerome and Augustine, essentially men of letters, carried into the sphere of thought the doctrines which he had practised in the sphere of deeds; and to Jerome and Augustine we must now turn.

Of the life of Jerome—to use the common equivalent of his real Greek name Hieronymus, which means 'the man of the Holy Word'—

**Early events of Jerome's life** a brief account will suffice. Great as is the importance of his writings for the growth of Catholicism, few episodes in his career were of much permanent significance, and he never held any high position in the Church. It will therefore be necessary only to mention here his early sojournings in the desert, where he lay covered with a sack black with dust, drinking only water and eating uncooked food;—his arrival at Rome, in 382, to act as secretary to Pope Damasus; the fierce enmities he aroused there among men and the warm friendships he contracted with women.

For us his cardinal work begins, however, when he indignantly shook off the dust of Rome and, accompanied by the faithful Paula and Eustochium, betook himself to the peaceful shade of Bethlehem to pursue his great task of translating the Bible from the Hebrew into

Latin.. He had already, while living in Rome, revised the Latin translations of the New Testament and had closely studied the fifty rolls of Origen's Hexapla in which six versions of the Old Testament were set out. The examination showed him that a real translation, the *Hebraica Veritas*, could only be made from the Hebrew, and in 386 he set to work. It was a prodigious undertaking, scarcely appreciated at its true value in Jerome's own

**Jerome's translation of the Bible**

day, and no one but the most devoted of scholars could possibly have carried it through. But Jerome, in spite of all his defects of temper, was both a great scholar and a great Christian, and before he died, in 420, he had completed one of the master books of the world, as potent an instrument of instruction for the Roman Catholic Church as the Authorised Version for Protestantism.

Jerome was above all things a scholar, and there was in him something of that narrowness of mind which too often goes with profound learning. Augustine had a much wider outlook, and to the doctrinal literature of the Church he contributed just those elements in which Jerome was lacking. Like Tertullian and Cyprian, he was a native of Africa, and even into theology he brings the warmth and fervour of his African sun.

The facts of Augustine's life are simple. He was born in 354 at Thagaste, a small town in Numidia, his father being a pagan and his mother, Monica, an earnest and devout Christian. An education at the university of Carthage, consisting chiefly of the study of Vergil and Cicero, strengthened his natural taste for literature, and he became a professor of rhetoric, teaching first at Carthage and then at Rome, and finally (384) accepting an appointment at Milan. Up till that time neither his faith nor his morals were beyond reproach. He had been infected by the Manichaean heresy and he was living in sin with a woman who had borne him a child. But at Milan he heard Ambrose preaching, and in 386, after some cruel searchings of heart and conscience, he was converted and baptised into the Catholic Church, together with his son Adeodatus and his bosom

friend Alypius. This ends the first period of his life, a period whose story is told with incomparable effect by Augustine himself in his *Confessions*.

In 387 his mother died at Ostia and Augustine returned to Africa. There he was ordained to the priesthood and in 395 became bishop of Hippo, a post which he held until his death in 430, his last days

coinciding with the beginning of the siege of his city by Geiseric, king of the

Vandals. At Hippo, in 413, three years after the sack of Rome by Alaric, he began his greatest work, *De Civitate Dei* (The City of God), which occupied the next thirteen years and embodies the fruit of his experience of life. The City of God, the *Confessions*, and Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* were the three favourite books of medieval times, and the first of the three is still both for the moralist and the historian one of absorbing interest. As Dean Weldon says in his excellent edition of the Latin text :

The *De Civitate Dei* has been one of the great books in human history, greater even in its effect or influence than in itself. For it is a book which breathed hope into a despondent, and faith into a sceptical, society, and which turned men's eyes away from the grave of a dead or dying world to the resurrection of a living and conquering Christ. The *De Civitate Dei* made its appeal at its publication, and may make the same appeal now, to an age crying aloud for reconstruction.

By the third decade of the fifth century Jerome and Augustine had firmly laid the foundations of the Catholic Faith. Moreover, the temporal and spiritual power of the Catholic Church was also by this time fully established : it only remained to fix upon a centre from which that power should radiate over Europe. Her past history marked Rome out for the place, and during the fifth and sixth centuries the Church gradually regained for her the position which during the third and fourth centuries she had lost.

The process began with the capture of the city by Alaric in 410, an event which finally destroyed the lingering pagan belief in Rome's invincible fortune and left the ground open for the growth of a new and

more spiritual power ; it culminated in the pontificate of Gregory the First (590-603). In the interval between 410 and 590 a succession of able men occupied the papal throne, and they used every opportunity to strengthen and extend the influence of their see. For example, when the feeble emperors Honorius and Valentinian retired to the seclusion of Ravenna, such popes as Innocent and Boniface took their place as rulers in Rome, and when Attila invaded Italy in 451 it was Pope Leo the Great who, by the solemn terrors of religion, persuaded the barbarian to withdraw beyond the Alps.

Leo, who was pope from 440 to 460, comes next to Ambrose and Gregory in achievement. Not only did he save Rome from Attila ; four years later he at least averted the worst cruelties of Geiseric, and although he could not prevent the plunder of the Capitol, prevailed upon the Vandal to refrain from bloodshed. In his government of the Church he was equally successful. At the Council of Chalcedon he boldly claimed the primacy among all the sees for Rome, and by the force of his arguments

**Achievements of  
Leo the Great**

won a signal victory. From the emperor Valentinian he obtained an edict confirming Rome's supreme authority ; and while in the East he refuted the Monophysite heresy. In Italy he crushed out the last vestiges of Manichaeism. His letters and sermons—we have nearly a hundred of each—are filled with the same spirit of cheerful vigour that he showed in actual life ; and it is plain from them that in his judgement the only hope of harmony for his troubled age lay in the Catholic Church.

Of Leo's successors in the fifth century Gelasius (492-496) alone need here be mentioned ; and in the sixth century Gregory stands so far above the other popes in importance that an account of his pontificate may perhaps serve as a compendium of the rest. Gregory was born about 540, the son of a wealthy nobleman Gordianus and of the saintly Silvia. His father, like Ambrose's before him, held high official rank and Gregory himself soon reached the great position of prefect of Rome (573). For a time he wavered between secular and religious interests, now

devoting himself to a study of Roman law, now immersed in the theological writings of Jerome and Augustine. Finally, he decided for the life of religion, and after founding seven monasteries with his inherited property retired into a monk's cell. For three years he occupied one bare room in the palace on the Caelian Hill where his father had held his receptions, and then was called from his retreat by Pope Pelagius and sent as papal nuncio to Constantinople, only returning in 585.

For the next five years he was head of the monastery which he had founded on Benedict's rule: but when Pelagius died of the plague in 590 the Romans insisted that their former prefect should now become their bishop.

**Gregory consecrated** With Gregory, as with  
**Bishop of Rome** Ambrose, it was a case of 'nolo episcopari' ('I

do not wish to be made bishop'), but the people were too enthusiastic to accept his refusals and a miracle ratified their choice. As the procession of penitents which Gregory had organized to stay the pestilence passed through the streets chanting hymns, the figure of the Archangel Michael was seen upon the summit of Hadrian's Mausoleum by the Tiber. He sheathed his flaming sword, the plague ceased, and henceforth the great building was known as the Castle of S. Angelo. So it was that on the third of September, 590, Gregory was consecrated and began the marvellous fourteen years of his bishopric.

To-day, perhaps, we are inclined to attach most importance to Gregory's political influence, but he himself always put his episcopal functions first. His controversial writings, his sermons and his pastoral epistles must have cost him infinite thought and labour, and his treatise, *Regulae Pastoralis Liber* (The Book of Pastoral Rule), became in later days the recognized manual of a bishop's duties, which it behaved every new prelate to learn by heart. To the organization of public worship he brought the same energy as he had brought to the organization of his monastery, and the changes he introduced into church music are still recalled to us by Gregorian chants. In his daily life he was a model to all clerics. Paul the Deacon, his biographer, writes:

Never at rest, he was always occupied either in caring for the interests of his people, or in writing some edifying treatise, or in searching out the secrets of heaven by the grace of contemplation. Other pontiffs gave their time to building churches and adorning them with gold and silver: Gregory devoted all his strength to gaining souls.

The wonder is that Gregory was able to concentrate his thoughts, as he did, on spiritual problems, for the claims of worldly affairs were constant and severe. When he was appointed, the Lombards were the real masters of Italy, although the Papacy was the greatest landowner in the country, and it was his first business to bring about a working arrangement between the two powers. This he was able to do through his influence with Queen Theodelinda, and generally speaking in his time the see of Rome and the Lombard court were on good terms.

Even so, the care of 'Peter's Patri-mony' was no light task, and the supervision of the many officials employed on the papal estates would

have taken all one ordi- **His administrative**  
nary man's time. But **and political genius**  
Gregory, as we see by his letters, distracted by innumerable tasks, still kept his eye on the details of property management. 'You have sent me,' he writes to his factor in Sicily, 'one miserable horse and five good donkeys. The horse I cannot ride because it is miserable, nor the donkeys, good as they are, because they are donkeys.'

Moreover, besides administering the landed property of the Church, Gregory practically managed all the social and military affairs of southern Italy. He appointed the commanders of garrisons and provided for the defence of towns; it was upon him that the duty of ransoming prisoners of war fell; from his granaries came the corn that was supplied to the people in time of dearth. His subordinates reported to him any act of injustice, from the robbing of a poor peasant to the pillage of a rich monastery; and Gregory took care that the wrong should not go unpunished. The civil law might be invoked, but behind the civil law stood the supreme sanction of the Church.

Gregory's political activities were equally formidable. The maintenance of

such power in Italy as the Caesar at Constantinople still possessed depended almost entirely on his efforts, and in his dealings with the Lombards he was left to fight his own battles without any imperial aid in money or in men. When Agilulf attacked Rome it was only Gregory's influence that induced him to raise the siege; and when at last, in 599, peace was concluded between the Empire and the Lombards it was plainly Gregory's tact and wisdom that guided negotiations to their happy end.

Nor were the pope's political activities confined to Italy. To the emperors at Constantinople, to the feeble Maurice and the treacherous Phocas, he addressed frequent letters of exhortation and admonition. In Africa both the imperial officials and the common people listened to his advice and accepted his authority, while often it was hard to distinguish whether they bowed to his orders out of respect for his personal character or in obedience to the see of Rome. In Gaul, where the bishop of Arles was his direct representative, he did his best to check the vices of the Merovingian kings. In Spain, in Dalmatia and in Istria his right to give advice was recognized, and the fashion in which he exercised that right established definitely for centuries yet to come the moral supremacy of the Roman see.

Britain lies under special obligations to him. In his early manhood, so Bede tells us, he was walking one day in the Roman Forum and saw a group of fair-haired boys from England, probably brought there to be sold as slaves. 'Alas,' he said, 'that lads so fair should be enslaved to darkness! What are they called?' When he was told that they were Angli, he cried: 'Nay, not Angli but Angeli; they are fit playmates for the angels in the skies. Where do they come from?' 'From Deira,' his friend replied. 'De ira Dei servandi,' he retorted, 'they must be saved from the wrath of God; and if their king's name is Aelle that is all the more reason why Alleluia should be sung in his land.' Accordingly he determined to evangelise the distant island and, obtaining permission from Pope Benedict, set out

on his journey, only to be stopped by another sign from heaven. On the third day a locust ('locusta') settled on his book as he sat reading; and the omen, 'loco sta' (stay where you are), was fulfilled at once by the arrival of messengers from the pope bidding him return.

This was in 576, and from that day for the next twenty years Gregory was immersed in affairs of church and state. But he never forgot or abandoned his original plan, and although he was not able to come to Britain himself, he dispatched the monk Augustine there in 586, putting him at the head of a mission with the powers of an abbot. Augustine landed at Richborough in 597, and making S. Martin's Church in Canterbury his headquarters baptised King Ethelbert at Whitsuntide, and in the following years brought over a large part of southern Britain to the Catholic faith. But even if Augustine was the

direct agent of this **Organization of English Church** conversion, it should always be remembered

that it was Gregory who gave him his instructions; Gregory who ordered that he should be consecrated bishop at Arles; Gregory, finally, who in a series of letters to the new prelate laid down in outline the whole future organization of the English Church. The mission sent by Gregory was the turning point in the struggle against Teutonic heathenism, and even as early as Gregory's death (605) the triumph of Christianity in England was certain.

Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome and Gregory stand out pre-eminent in the early history of Christianity, and to them alone was given the title of 'Doctores Ecclesiae' (Teachers of the Church). Men of different characters and of varying abilities, diplomat, artist, scholar, administrator, they were yet united by two strong bonds—an intense desire for religious unity and an intense belief in their spiritual power. Four in number, as an enthusiastic monk says, like the four rivers of Paradise, the streams of their eloquence water the somewhat arid field of medieval thought, and by their influence was created that Church which guided Europe through the Dark Ages to the Renaissance.



**WHERE THE SYRIAN ASCETIC S. SIMEON LIVED THIRTY YEARS UPON HIS FAMOUS PILLAR**

It was at Djebel Smana, a desert spot near Antioch, that S. Simeon Stylites (390-459) set up the sixty-foot-high pillar where he spent the last thirty years of his life. Here in the sixth century a monastery was built to perpetuate his memory, the famous pillar—fragments of which still remain—occupying the centre of a great octagonal hall. The monastery was a cruciform building with an apse at the east end and a loggia at the west, and it soon attained such reputation and wealth that it became the focus for a large accretion of conventual buildings, hostels and houses.

*Photo. Derounian*

# THE WAR OF THE CREEDS

A Study of the Age when the whole Fabric of Society could be shaken by subtle Points of Doctrine

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THE rivalry of religions in the early Roman Empire, and the ultimate triumph of Christianity, have been described in earlier Chapters (74, 80 and 87). But this triumph was followed by a war of creeds within the Church itself, which was to have a profound effect on the course of the world's history. The controversies which raged during the Byzantine period had their origins in the early years of the Church. To understand their later developments, it is necessary to go back to their beginnings.

The idea of the divinity of Christ had for the men of the first and second centuries nothing in itself incredible. The world was full of gods and daemons, impersonations of or emanations from the Ultimate Being. Nor did it seem improbable that these should assume the forms of ordinary men. At Lystra, according to the fourteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, 'when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.' Nor was this habit of mind confined to the common sort. Intellectual pagans, as time went on, were quite prepared to include Jesus in their pantheon; they resented only the Christian claim to his exclusive deification. The Christians, on the other hand, did not deny the existence of the pagan gods. For S. Paul there were 'gods many and lords many'; but these were emanations, not from the Principle of Good, but from the Principle of Evil.

This makes it comparatively easy to understand how the title of Christ to be the Son of God was accepted by the

primitive church in all simplicity. For the Christians of Jerusalem he was the promised Messiah, who came 'not to destroy but to fulfil the law'; and until, in A.D. 135, the edict of Hadrian scattered the church of Jerusalem, it maintained its Jewish tradition, and continued to maintain it, in its exile beyond Jordan, as the now 'heretical' sect of the Ebionites. Even when S. Paul, repudiating the bondage of the law, carried the gospel to the Gentiles there was at first little disposition to examine its philosophic basis.

The rapid growth of the Church and the inclusion in it of large numbers of Gentile converts brought it, however, into open rivalry with other religions of salvation, and against these it had to make good its exclusive claims. This expansion also brought it into touch with the higher thought of the age, and so necessitated the evolution of a Christian philosophy which should reconcile the faith of the Gospel with human science. The main difficulty in this process was precisely that peculiar characteristic of Christianity which was its principal source of strength as opposed to the other religions of salvation, namely, the substitution as the unique Saviour of an historical personality, the man Christ Jesus, for such purely mythical figures as Mithras. The attempt to give a philosophic basis to this new conception raised a host of exceedingly difficult questions.

What was meant by Christ's Sonship? In what relation did the Son stand to the Father? Was he truly God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, or was he a creation of or emanation from the Godhead, 'before all worlds' indeed, but not from all eternity? If he was truly God, was

Necessity for a  
Christian philosophy



he also truly man? If he was indeed 'perfect man and perfect God,' in what relation did his manhood stand to his Godhead? Was his perfect manhood the result merely of an 'indwelling' in him of the Godhead, or was it due to a hypostatic union of the Godhead and the manhood? If the Second Person of the Trinity was indeed 'conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,' were there in Christ, thus incarnate, two natures and two wills, or only one nature and one will? If Christ as God possessed infinite knowledge and wisdom, and as man was born without sin, how could he be truly man, since man is by his nature limited and sinful? How could he be subject to human temptations?

Before touching on the controversies which arose out of the attempts to answer these questions it may be well to explain why they aroused a

**Controversial Spirit of the Age** passion so intense that, even when the barbarians were thundering at the gates of Rome and all the foundations of the civilized world were shaking, educated men could think that the thing most worth fighting for was some obscure point of doctrine. Perhaps no explanation is necessary; for the 'odium theologicum' is still with us, its passage down the ages marked with a trail of fire and blood. But, as has been explained in the chapter on the rival religions, the conditions in the Roman Empire were peculiarly favourable to the growth of such a spirit. Cut off, under the autocracy, from all intelligent share in public affairs, disgusted with the cruelty and obscenity of a world which they were powerless to influence, save in one way, people who thought at all developed an often morbid desire to be 'saved'; and, according to the ideas of the time, to follow the upward path of salvation successfully it was necessary not only to perform all the prescribed rites, but to be armed at each stage of the journey with the correct formula.

This conception, which found its extreme expression in the Gnostic system, was common also to the Christian Church. 'Whosoever would be saved, it is above all necessary that he hold the Catholic

faith'—there was no difference of opinion as to that. The question was: What is the Catholic faith? To philosophic minds the difference between 'homousios' (of one substance) and 'homoiousios' (of like substance) might spell the difference between monotheism and polytheism. To the mass of Christians, including the clergy, it spelt the difference between heaven and hell. This may serve to explain the fury which these theological controversies provoked, especially in the East, where Greek intellectual subtlety and Greek contentiousness continued to flourish till the end. The union of Church and State, which it was hoped would give a stable religious foundation to the Empire, only served to introduce fresh divisions as controversy begot controversy. And since in these transcendental debates no argument could ever be conclusive, they had to be settled, as often as not, by the intervention of the civil power.

The contact of the Church with the Hellenic world led very early to the attempt to interpret the mysteries of the Christian faith in the terms of Greek philosophy. There are traces of this even in the epistles of S. Paul. The process, however, so far as the books of the New Testament are concerned, is most conspicuous in the fourth gospel.

The writer of this life of Christ, whoever he may have been, was clearly influenced by Platonism. Jesus is no longer the simple Son of Man of

the earlier gospels; he is the Logos of Plato's philosophy; 'In the beginning was the Word (Logos), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' He is made to announce himself as eternally pre-existent: 'Before Abraham was, I am.' Thus early, then, the conception of Christ as the Divine Logos had found its way into the Church. There was as yet, however, no fixed doctrine as to the relation of the Logos to the Godhead on the one hand and to the human Christ on the other.

This gave rise, very early, to fundamental differences of opinion. There were the 'heretics' known as Docetae (from Greek 'dokein,' to seem) who held that Christ lived and suffered only in

**Platonic influence in the Fourth Gospel**

appearance, a doctrine adopted and developed by the Christian Gnostics and later by the Manichaeans. More important, if only for the counter-movement they provoked, were those who rejected the separate personal subsistence of the Logos, an opinion which was dominant in the Church at the close of the second century. These again were divided into two schools, the Adoptionists, holding that Christ was a mere man, miraculously conceived indeed, but adopted as the Son of God only by the supreme degree in which he had been filled with the divine wisdom and power, while the Modalists taught that Christ was a manifestation of God himself.

Of these latter, the strict Monarchians, whose chief spokesman was the Roman presbyter Sabellius, held that God was One, and the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were not three Persons, but only three modes or expressions of the one Deity. It is to be noted that at Rome, though Pope Calixtus tried for a while to mediate between the opposing views, the trinitarian doctrine—that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three persons in one Godhead—prevailed before the close of the third century. The ‘substantial’ unity of the Father and the Son, for which Athanasius was later to contend, was thus early asserted by the Roman Church.

It was not, however, Rome but Alexandria, where East and West mingled, that was the nursery of those subtle disputations by which

**Origen, Father of Church and Empire  
Christian Theology** were to be distracted.

In the Catechetical School of Alexandria, towards the close of the second century, Pantaenus and Clement had begun to develop Christian ideas with the aid of Greek philosophy. Among their pupils was Origen, the father of Christian theology, who became head of the school in A.D. 203. Of his teaching it must here suffice to say that, in combating the neo-Platonists, he fell under their influence and transmuted the faith of the Church into ideas which bear the impress of their thought. For him, since all things visible are but transient images of things which have their real existence only in the other-world of ideas, the

historic Christ fell into the background and the thought of the instructed Christian was to be concentrated on the Logos, who is with the Father from all eternity, and whose incarnation and passion are the means by which the rule of evil and demons on earth shall be overcome and the fallen spirits of men redeemed from the penal bondage of the flesh. The subtlety of Origen’s argument and the occasional obscurity of his thought led to his teaching being variously interpreted, so that in later days both the orthodox and the unorthodox could appeal to his authority.

About the middle of the third century, Paul of Samosata, a disciple of the Alexandrian school and bishop of the great see of Antioch, attempted to explain Origen’s doctrine. He taught that, as the One God could not

appear on earth ‘substantially,’ he could not become a person in Jesus Christ, but

**Earliest seeds  
of Arianism**

that he filled the man Jesus with his Logos (Wisdom) and his Power. This idea, though condemned by the Synod of Antioch in 268, was taken up and developed by Paul’s pupil Lucian. Lucian, indeed, maintained that the Logos did become a person in Jesus Christ, but since he held his teacher’s views, he was forced to see in the Logos a second essence, created by God before all worlds, who came down to earth and assumed a human body, in which he filled the place of the intellectual or spiritual principle. According to Lucian, then, Christ was not ‘perfect man,’ for the personal element in him was a divine essence, nor was he ‘perfect God,’ since the divine essence, having become a person, was other than the One God and of another nature. It was this idea that the ‘arch-heretic’ Arius took up and developed according to his lights, which were somewhat dim.

Arius was of a clerical type still sufficiently familiar. He was minister of a fashionable church in Alexandria, an eloquent preacher, in appearance tall and ascetic, and of an agreeable if somewhat unctuous address which made him a great favourite with the ladies. He might have lived and died in the odour of sanctity, had not his bishop thought fit to

contribute to the discussion of Christ's nature a description of the Logos as 'ever-begotten' and 'unbegotten-begotten.' To Arius this seemed rank blasphemy and heresy. In his zeal for the unity and simplicity of the Godhead he rushed into the fray, with results which were to shake the Church and the Empire to their foundations. He not only denounced Bishop Alexander's definition; he propounded a counter-definition of his own. The Son, he maintained, is a created being, to whom the Father before all time gave an existence formed out of 'not-being.'

But for the great events taking place in the political world it is possible that the

controversy thus provoked might, like so many others, have remained purely local; for the Church had as yet no universal system, no fixed canon of Scripture, and no authoritative creed. But it so happened that this quarrel, after simmering for a time, boiled over soon after Constantine had defeated Licinius and established himself as sole emperor (A.D. 324). Now Constantine, for politic reasons, had accepted Christianity and decided to make it the state religion, and a quarrel which threatened to split this religion into rival and hostile camps was therefore extremely unwelcome to him. When therefore Bishop Alexander excommunicated Arius, and the latter ap-

pealed to Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, who sympathised with his views, the emperor thought the time had come for him to intervene.

Since Christianity was now to be the religion of the Empire, it was clear that an authoritative decision must be reached as to its essential doctrines. The question was how. When the pagan emperor Aurelian captured Antioch in 272 he bluntly told Paul of Samosata, who had been viceroy of the queen of Palmyra as well as bishop, that he must conform his teaching to that of the Church and bishop of Rome, which was regarded as a political rather than a religious victory for the Roman party. But this was a precedent which Constantine was not likely to follow, since he had deprived Rome of its importance as the centre of political unity.

His solution was the first general council of the Catholic Church, which in A.D. 325 met at Nicaea, in Bithynia, under



**MOSAICS IN AN ARIAN BAPTISTERY**

The church of S. Maria in Cosmedin at Ravenna was built 493-526, under the Arian Ostrogoths, one of three intended for the Arian worship. The mosaics inside the dome over the Arian baptistery, representing Christ's baptism by John, are closely copied from S. Giovanni in Fonte, the baptistery of the Orthodox, but they show diminished technique and an increased clumsiness.

*Photo, Alinari*

the presidency of the emperor himself. Before dealing with the work of this momentous assembly, however, a few words must be said about another rival religion, the Manichæan, which at this time was beginning to spread rapidly over the Empire, gaining its votaries mainly among the cultured classes, and notably among the remnants of the Gnostics and the worshippers of Mithras, the downfall of whose cult had begun when, in A.D. 275, the Roman legions had been forced to abandon Dacia, but which was not finally to collapse until the victory of Theodosius in A.D. 394.

Mani was a Persian of noble birth, whose teachings have been noticed in Chapter 86. Organized as a powerful church, Manichæism enforced a rigid morality. But, just as the Catholic Church, gathering in the tares and the wheat together, had in time to suffer two standards of life even in its clergy, the 'secular' and the 'religious,' so the Manichæan church was forced to make a distinction between the 'elect' or 'perfect,' who practised the most extreme asceticism, and the 'hearers' ('auditores') or catechumens, who were bound only to avoid idolatry and witchcraft, to lead virtuous and straightforward lives, and, above all, not to take life in any form.

The peculiar attraction of Manichæism for the mind of the age not only made it, towards the end of the fourth century, a serious rival to Christianity, but caused it to exercise a great influence on the teaching and practice of Christianity itself. It did much, more especially, to promote the ascetic ideals which during the century were gaining an ever-growing ascendancy in the Church. The greatest of the Fathers, Augustine of Hippo, himself fell under this influence. For nine

years, from A.D. 373 onward, he was a Manichæan 'auditor,' and even when, after his conversion to Christianity, he became the most formidable critic of Manichæism, he could not escape from its influence. His exaltation of the ideal of 'chastity,'

with its concomitant conception of marriage as a mere concession to the weakness of the flesh, and his uncompromising doctrine of the natural depravity of human nature were based, as Theodore of Mopsuesta pointed out, at least of the latter, on a view of the relations of spirit and matter which was hardly to be distinguished from Manichæan dualism.

Under the influence of Manichæism, indeed, or in competition with it, asceticism began to run riot in the Church, especially in the East. The Council of Nicaea, it is true, had the good sense to reject a proposal to enforce the

celibacy of the clergy; but nothing was done to curb the passion for pious self-torture which seized upon increasing crowds of people. Dirt and disease became the honourable insignia of saintship; loathsome fakirs exhibited their filth and their sores for the veneration of the faithful, while others invented still more ingenious methods of self-discipline or self-advertisement, lying on beds of iron spikes or, like S. Simeon Stylites, squatting for years on the top of a pillar.

The imagination of the age was impressed by these lofty examples: S. Augustine tells us in his Confessions how it was the action of two young men of his acquaintance in deserting the girls to whom they were engaged in order to turn monk that was one of the immediate causes of his conversion. And so, while the population of the Empire declined, for various reasons, and had to be replenished by barbarian settlers, the horde of



A MAJOR PROPHET

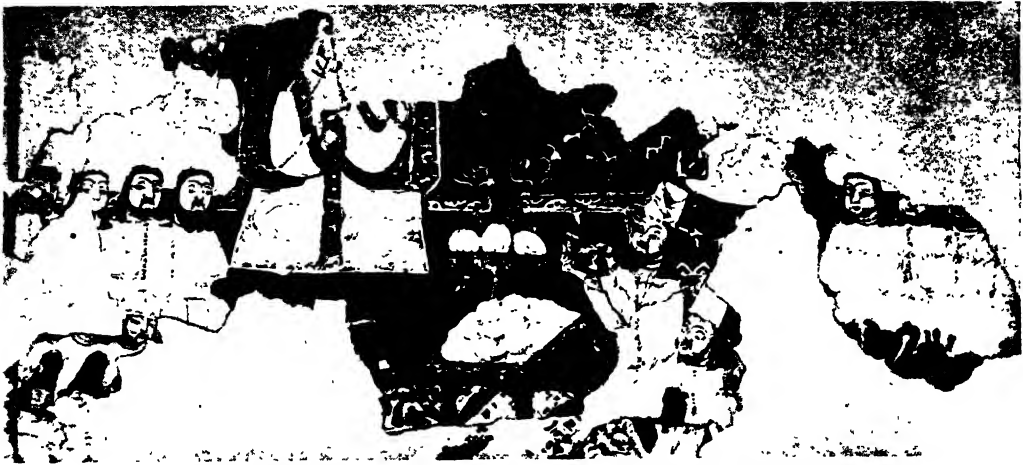
Mani began to preach his new religion in 242. After years of missionary activity he returned to Persia in 276. This portrait is re-drawn by F. C. Burkitt from a Turkistan fresco.

From *Le Coq*, 'Manichæan Miniatures'

fanatical monks increased and multiplied. They constituted the reserve battalions which, more 'especially in Egypt, the leaders of religious factions could call to their aid when argument had failed and appeal was made to force. They invaded the very councils of the Church. They reinforced and led the savage mobs of the cities in their attacks on 'heretics' and pagans; and, unlike the Manichaeans, they did not shrink from shedding blood. It was Nitrian monks who in A.D. 412, with the connivance of the patriarch Cyril of Alexandria, barbarously murdered the talented and beautiful Hypatia, for no

more. The dualistic views of the Bogomils, Cathars and Albigenses have been commonly ascribed to this source.

Since the object of Constantine in summoning the general council in 325 was to adjust the differences which were distracting the Church and he himself presided over the deliberations, it was natural that on the all-important question of the relation of the Son to the Father the outcome should have been a compromise. The creed as defined at Nicaea was not the 'Nicene Creed' as now recited in the churches, which was the work of the first Council of Constantinople in 381, but the



**ELECT MANICHAEANS CELEBRATING THEIR EUCHARIST**

Comparatively little is known of the ritual worship of the Manichaeans; but they undoubtedly had sacraments corresponding to Christian baptism and the Supper of the Lord. The latter seems to be depicted in this illuminated manuscript, the occasion, perhaps, being the annual festival of the 'Chair of Mani,' held to commemorate his crucifixion in March, 276. The celebrant is ceremonially offering bread and fruit, the only food permitted to the inner circle of 'Elect' Manichaeans

*From Dr. A. von Le Coq, 'Die Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittelasien' (Manichaean Miniatures)*

better reason than that she taught the neo-Platonic philosophy. They tore her to pieces with sharp oyster-shells.

Decidedly Manichaean dualism had invaded the Church, whose members were doing their best to prove the natural depravity of human nature. But Manichaeism as a system could not be tolerated in an Empire of which the ideal was discipline and unity, and successive emperors took measures to suppress it, culminating in the death penalty ordained by Justinian. Yet though in the sixth century it thus ceased to be an organized universal religion in the Empire, its influence continued to work more or less beneath the surface for seven centuries

definition of the relation of Christ to the Godhead is substantially identical. The creed of Eusebius of Caesarea, on which the Nicene formula was based, described Christ as 'God of God, Light of Light, only begotten Son, first-born of all creatures, before all worlds begotten of the Father,' thus embodying Origen's doctrine of the Son as a spiritual creation, which Origen himself, however, had not thought to be inconsistent with the Son being 'of one substance' with the Father. The Nicene Council suppressed the first part of this teaching of Origen, which played into the hands of the Arians, and laid stress on the second. The formula adopted proclaimed belief in 'one Lord

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one substance (homoousios) with the Father.'

This was sufficiently explicit to satisfy the Homoousians; but, since it did not explicitly exclude the Origenist interpretation, it was possible also for the majority of their opponents to accept it. The few recalcitrants, Arius himself and the bishops of Marmarica and Ptolemais, were excommunicated, and Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had accepted the decision of the council but had refused to join in damning those who did not, was banished to Gaul. This was a triumph for Bishop Alexander and for the Alexandrian school over the rival school of Antioch. As for the emperor Constantine, who after the proceedings entertained the bishops at a splendid banquet, he fondly hoped that peace had been restored to the Church.

He was mistaken. There was as yet no belief in the infallibility of general councils, and there was widespread and violent opposition to the doctrine formulated at Nicaea. This opposition centred round Arius, while 'orthodoxy' found its chief and at times almost its only champion in Athanasius, who had played a leading part in the council and had succeeded Alexander as bishop of Alexandria. In the teeth of this new tempest the resolution of Constantine wavered.

In A.D. 328 he recalled Eusebius of Nicomedia from exile, and this prelate, like his namesake of Caesarea, was now  
**Athanasius champion of Orthodoxy** denouncing the formula 'of one substance' as liable to heretical misinterpretation and as having no warrant in Holy Scripture. Two years later the emperor allowed Arius to return to Alexandria, and in 335, the presence of the rival champions having turned the city into an ecclesiastical bear-garden, he tried to calm matters down by sending Athanasius into exile in Gaul. Finally, since this 'turbulent priest' seemed now to be alone against all the world, he summoned Arius to Constantinople, where in 336 he suddenly died, smitten as the Athanasians

believed by the hand of God, before he could be formally readmitted to the communion of the Church. Constantine himself died in the following year, having been baptised on his death-bed by Eusebius of Nicomedia.

The quarrel, complicated by fresh developments, continued under his successors. Misgivings as to the implications of the Nicene formula produced ever new attempts to explain the inexplicable and ever renewed controversies, enlivened by mob violence and the mutual cursing of bishops. The Arian party itself split into factions. The Anomoioi held with Arius that the Son was unlike ('anomoios') the Father. The Homoioi believed in a general likeness of the Son to the Father. The Homoiousians maintained a 'likeness of nature' between the Father and the Son, and so virtually adopted the religious implications of the Nicene formula without adopting the formula itself.

This latter, 'semi-Arian,' doctrine became the dominant creed in the East under Constantine's successor Constantius.

But, though he became

sole emperor in 351,

he could never succeed in forcing it on the

West, which as time went on rallied overwhelmingly to the support of Athanasius. In the East, too, a reaction presently set in, possibly as a result of the severe lesson taught by the emperor Julian's vigorous but abortive efforts to re-establish paganism, and when, in A.D. 381, the council summoned to Constantinople by the emperor Theodosius reaffirmed the Nicene creed, it had behind it the mass of public opinion.

**Triumph of the Athanasian formula**

The triumph of the Athanasian formula is often represented as having secured the very thing at which Arius was aiming, namely, the preservation of the conception of the Oneness of God, and as having saved Christianity from degenerating into a polytheistic religion. However this may be, the Arian interlude certainly had important historical consequences. Quite apart from the effect of these dissensions, and of others which grew out of them, in weakening the resisting power of the Empire at the very time when it was beginning to feel the pressure of the

barbarian migrations, they revealed an opposition between the mental processes of the East and West which, as the result of later divergences, was to lead in A.D. 1054 to the final schism between the Western and Eastern Churches.

Another very important and less remote political outcome of the Arian controversy was due to the fact that when Fritigern and his Goths accepted Christianity, during the reign of the emperor Valens, they received it in its Arian form. For Ulfilas, the apostle of the Goths, who translated the Scriptures into their language and spent his life labouring among them, had himself received his training in the semi-Arian atmosphere of Constantinople under Constantine and his successor. The churches he founded remained true to the faith he had taught them; and so it came that when, in the fifth century, the Goths

**Arianism adopted by the Goths** invaded and settled in Italy, south-western Gaul and Spain, they were doubly hateful to the Roman or Romanised inhabitants as conquerors and heretics. They thus remained a separate race and nation; so that while, for instance, the barbarous pagan Clovis by accepting Catholic Christianity gained the support of the Roman church, and so was able to lay firm the foundations of a new nation formed out of conquerors and conquered, the humane and enlightened Theodoric the Great, though he respected the laws and the religion of the Catholic Italians, failed to consolidate the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy, which collapsed soon after his death. With the later downfall of the Goths in Spain Arianism finally perished.

Meanwhile, in the Empire itself, the seed sown in the Arian controversy was to produce rich crops of fresh heresies in rapid rotation. The Council of Nicaea had defined the substantial unity of the Father and the Son, but it had not defined the manner in which the divine and the human are united in Christ. This was a problem which puzzled even S. Augustine. Trained as he had been in the neo-Platonic philosophy, the doctrine of the Trinity was for him a fundamental truth, and his whole view of things was based on the

conception of 'the Father, from whom all being proceeds, the Son, from whom all being has its being thus, and the Holy Spirit, by whom all things are most harmoniously ordered.' It is the neo-Platonic trinity of the First Principle, the Logos and the World Soul. But how was this indivisible Unity in Trinity to be reconciled with the incarnation? How came it that 'God did so much honour to this (human) body as to assume it?' Augustine was content to bow in faith before so great a mystery.

Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, was more daring or more rash. He had been one of the most vigorous opponents of Arius, and his desire to emphasise the divinity of Christ and the unity of his person led him to deny the existence of a rational human spirit in Christ's human nature, this being replaced by the Logos, or spirit of holiness, so that his body was a glorified and spiritualised form of humanity. How else, he asked, can Christ have been without sin, since all men are sinners? Basing his argument on S. Paul's distinction between 'spirit, soul and body,' he argued that sin is due to the weakness of the human spirit, and that Christ's sinlessness was due to this spirit having been replaced by that divine Logos in whose image man had been created, so that by this substitution he had been made not less, but more perfectly human. His critics held that Christ had assumed the whole of human nature, including the rational soul, and accused Apollinaris of Docetism.

Even more bold and, from the modern point of view, more interesting was Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428), who as a biblical scholar showed

amazing independence and anticipated many of the conclusions of

**Anticipations of the 'Higher Criticism'**

the 'higher criticism.' As a theologian he accepted the Nicene teaching; but, in seeking to explain the union of the divine and human in Christ, he came perilously near the views of Paul of Samosata. For him the Logos assumed a complete manhood, which, like any other human being, had to pass through all the stages of moral growth. But in this process the Logos only dwelt in and supported the



man Jesus, and was not and could not be essentially connected with him, since the finite cannot contain the infinite.

Out of these speculations grew the further question, whether in Christ the divine nature ('physis') was as it were absorbed into and amalgamated with the human nature ('enosis,' in-being) so that only one ('monos') nature existed in him, or whether the two natures remained distinct. The 'Monophysite' view was held by the Alexandrians, represented by the patriarch Cyril, and it was they who, in their zeal for the perfect union of the two natures, championed the custom, which was by this time becoming very general, of describing the Blessed Virgin Mary as 'the Mother of God' ('theotokos'). The propriety of this description was denounced, among others, by Theodore of Mopsuestia. It was not, however, till his pupil Nestorius became bishop of Constantinople, in 428, that the 'theotokos' question became acute, with ultimate disastrous results for Church and Empire.

Nestorius began his episcopate by a vigorous suppression of Arian and other heretics, which should have been sufficient warrant for his orthodoxy. But when Anastasius, a disciple of Theodore of Mopsuestia, was attacked for preaching against the Theotokos, he came forward publicly in his defence, declaring that to style the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God was blasphemous and absurd, since God could not have a mother. This pronouncement caused

**Acrimony over the 'Theotokos' question** pandemonium in the Church. Cyril of Alexandria entered the lists against Nestorius. Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, the most notable theologian of his age, who for many years had been attacking the Alexandrian school as the nursery of heresies, took up the challenge on the side of Nestorius. Both Cyril and Nestorius, confident of the justice of their respective causes, appealed to the arbitration of Celestine, bishop of Rome. •

Unfortunately for Nestorius, he was not in good odour with the pope; for he supported his master Theodore's objection to the doctrine of original sin championed by Jerome and Augustine, and was inclined to favour the followers of Pelagius, who



**PATRIARCH OF THE EAST**

Ecclesiastical head of the Nestorian Church is the Patriarch-Catholicus. He is chosen always from the hereditary 'patriarchal family,' and assumes the title 'Mar' (lord) and the name Simon following his own Christian name.

*From Fontecade, 'The Lesser Eastern Churches'*

taught that original sin consists, not 'in the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered in the offspring of Adam,' but in 'the following of Adam'—a doctrine which had just been condemned at Rome. A synod summoned to the Lateran in 430 accordingly upheld the style of 'Mother of God,' and entrusted Cyril with the task of persuading or forcing Nestorius to retract. Excommunications and counter-excommunications followed, and the turmoil reached such a pitch that the joint emperors, Valentinian III and Theodosius II, determined to summon another general council to settle this and other questions.

The council began to assemble at Ephesus in 431. Nestorius himself, under the protection of an armed escort, set out for the place of meeting. But he never reached it; for Cyril, who presided, finding himself surrounded by a respectable number of his own partisans, did not think fit to wait for him, and both he and Theodoret were condemned unheard. This, of course, settled nothing, and Theodosius ordered the bishops to transfer themselves to Chalcedon, where he would be in a

better position to keep them in order. As he himself inclined to Monophysitism, the result was now a foregone conclusion. The council upheld the doctrine that the Blessed Virgin is the 'Mother of God,' which was henceforth that of the Catholic Church. Nestorius and Cyril were both deprived of their sees. \*

The results were momentous. Nestorius himself, though his essential orthodoxy could hardly be questioned, was cast out of the Church and became a wandering exile. He died in 451, done to death, as there is good reason to suppose, by the monks of the Thebaid whose protection he had sought. But the outcome of his condemnation was the establishment of a

new communion, known as the Nestorian church, though it traces its doctrines to Theodore of

Mopsuesta, 'the Interpreter,' rather than to Nestorius. This great church, founded by refugees in Persia and protected by the Magian king as a useful weapon at need against the Orthodox Empire, flourished exceedingly. Its supreme bishop (catholicus), who assumed the title of Patriarch of the East, and whose seat was first at Seleucia-Ctesiphon and later at Bagdad, ruled over a community which by the year 1000 embraced not only the bulk of the population of Syria, Irak and Khorassan, but had established bishoprics in central Asia, and even in India and China.

For a thousand years, even after the Mahomedan conquest, the Nestorian church played a leading part in the history of Mesopotamia. But the successive waves of Tatar invasion during the Middle Ages shattered it, and when in A.D. 1400 Timur took Bagdad the remnants of it that were left took refuge in the mountains of Kurdistan. Here they remained, an obscure sect under a patriarch who had become practically an hereditary tribal chief, exposed to the constant attacks of the predatory Kurds, until the Great War, when those that remained of them were forced to seek protection under the British flag in Irak.

The dispute as to the propriety of the title of 'Mother of God' being given to the Blessed Virgin was really the first

stage in the controversy concerning the One or Two Natures in Christ, with which it was closely connected. This controversy, however, did not become a serious menace to the peace of the Church and Empire until 448, when it was raised in an acute form by the Eutychian trouble. Eutyches was an aged and obscure Constantinopolitan abbot, who had gained a passing notoriety as a partisan of Cyril at the Council of Ephesus and was now accused by his diocesan, Bishop Eusebius of Dorylaeum, and by the patriarch Domnus of Antioch, of trying to propagate the doctrine of the One Nature. Haled before a local synod, presided over by the patriarch Flavian of Constantinople, he maintained his opinion that after the union of the two natures Christ had but one nature, that of the incarnate Logos. He was deposed and excommunicated.

The matter might have ended here had it not been complicated by court intrigues. Eutyches appealed to the emperor Theodosius, to Pope Leo, and to his fellow-monks of Constantinople, while his friend wrote on his behalf to Dioscorus, who had succeeded Cyril as patriarch of Alexandria. The emperor, with whom Flavian was out of favour, decided to take up the case; Dioscorus was insistent; and it was therefore decided to submit the question to a general council, which was to meet at Ephesus under the presidency of the bishop of Alexandria.

This council, which assembled in 449, outdid all others in the violence of its proceedings, and was rightly called by Pope Leo the 'Robber Synod.' Bishop Dioscorus, like his predecessor Cyril, did not

#### The 'Robber Synod' of Ephesus

await the arrival of all the fathers. Flavian of Constantinople, indeed, was there, armed with the famous letter in which the great bishop of Rome defined the orthodox doctrine, but the pope's legates had not arrived before the proceedings closed. But in any case argument and authority would have had little weight in this amazing assembly; for Dioscorus and his partisans were reinforced by a rabble of Syrian monks who, with the active assistance of the bishops, routed their opponents with

fists and cudgels. Flavian himself died of his injuries, thus gaining the crown of martyrdom. The council, amid curses and howls of fanatical rage, condemned Flavian of Constantinople. Domnus of Antioch and Eusebius of Dorylaeum. Eutyches was justified, and the doctrine of the One Nature was accepted.

This procedure excited comment even in that violent age, but the fact that the emperor Theodosius and the empress Eudocia sympathised with the Monophysite view prevented any immediate action being taken. In 450, however, Theodosius died, and his orthodox successor Marcian, at the instance of Pope Leo, summoned the bishops to another council, not indeed in Italy as the pope had desired, but at Chalcedon, where the fathers would be under the emperor's eye. This council, which met in 451 under the presidency of the Roman legates, reversed the decisions of the 'Robber Synod,' reaffirmed the creeds



EGYPTIAN CHRISTIAN BOWL

Bowls of fairly thick bronze with drop handles and openwork foot were in common use among the Copts of Egypt. Several exported specimens dating back to the Saxon period have been found in Kent—this one at Wingham.

*British Museum*

of Nicaea and Constantinople, together with the Ephesine formula of 431, and on the question immediately at issue accepted the definition put forward by Pope Leo in his letter to Flavian, which compromised between the two extreme positions by declaring that Christ had two natures, each perfect in itself and each distinct from the other yet perfectly united in one person, who was at once both God and man. In spite of the fact, to which Nestorius had appealed, that Leo himself, in his letter to Flavian



VESTMENTS OF THE EARLY COPTIC MONOPHYSITE CHURCH

The Coptic church of Egypt is of peculiar interest as representing the ancient church of Alexandria, whose Monophysite faith it preserves. This sixth-century fresco from Wadi Sarga near Asyut represents the three Children of Babylon in the fiery furnace, with five attendant figures in the foreground wearing the vestments in use in the Coptic church before the Arab conquest. They include a white alb ('stoicharion,' or 'tunniak'), a maniple ('kisanan') on the left arm, and a chasuble ('phainolion').

*British Museum*

had spoken of the Virgin as 'the Mother of the Lord,' the propriety of the title 'Mother of God' was also reaffirmed.

The council, in spite of the dissent of the Roman legates, also passed a canon of immense significance for the future history of the Church. This asserted that, since a special pre-eminence had been given to the bishopric of old Rome, as the old seat of the imperial government, so an equal pre-eminence should be accorded to the bishopric of Constantinople, as the new seat of this government. This canon was never accepted by the Roman church, though it accepted the doctrinal definitions of the council. It was, and still remains, the basis of the claim of the Eastern Orthodox church to complete independence of and equality with Rome.

The definition of the doctrine of the Two Natures at Chalcedon, however, by no means ended the controversy. It was

hotly denounced as  
**Monophysites defy the Council of Chalcedon** but another form of the Nestorian heresy, and the partisans of the Monophysite view, who were strongly represented among the monks, rose in revolt. The chief focus of disturbance was Alexandria, where Dioscorus had been superseded by the orthodox Proterius. The Alexandrians, not only fearing for their souls but also enraged by the subordination of their exalted patriarch, broke into furious rioting in which savage monks from the Thebaid once more took a prominent part. Proterius was murdered, and the people elected the Monophysite Timothy Aelurus in his stead. About the same time similar scenes were witnessed at Antioch, where the orthodox bishop Martyrius was ousted by the Monophysite Peter Fullo.

In face of the violence and strength of this opposition the resolution of the emperors in time began to waver. The emperor Leo I, indeed, dealt faithfully with Peter and Timothy, in spite of the powerful ecclesiastical backing they secured. The continuance of the troubles, however, suggested other counsels, and in 482 the emperor Zeno, on the advice of Bishop Acacius of Constantinople, issued the so-called Henotikon which, while condemning Nestorius and Eutyches,

ignored the definitions of Chalcedon and accepted the doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria. So far from promoting the peace which its title implied, this document only poured fresh oil on the flames. An angry correspondence followed between Rome and Constantinople, which ended by Pope Felix excommunicating Acacius; and, though the latter died in 489, the quarrel only ended on the death of the emperor Anastasius twenty-nine years later.

Monophysitism had reached its highest point under this emperor, and in 512 its triumph seemed to be assured when Severus, a Monophysite monk who had been recently appointed bishop of Antioch and almost at once ejected by the orthodox, came to Constantinople and persuaded Anastasius to depose not only his orthodox supplanter Flavian but also the orthodox patriarch, Macedonius of Constantinople. The triumph of Severus was, however, short-lived. One of the first acts of Justin I on his accession in 518 was to depose Severus in turn, and by this and similar vigorous measures, which were inspired by his nephew and successor Justinian, he succeeded in making the orthodox doctrine dominant in the chief centres of his Asiatic dominions, and in reconciling Constantinople with Rome. Egypt, however, to which Severus betook himself, clung fanatically to the Monophysite faith, which also continued to prevail widely in Syria and Asia Minor.

Justinian, who became emperor in 527, at first tried conciliation, and invited the Monophysite leaders to a conference, with a view to compromise. This failing, however, he deposed

**Justinian's efforts for conciliation**  
 suspected bishops and, learning that the views of Origen—now regarded by the orthodox as the fount of heresies—were spreading in Syria, he issued an edict condemning fourteen propositions drawn from his writings, in the hope of destroying the pestilent errors at their source. A synod presided over by the patriarch Mennas of Constantinople confirmed the imperial judgement, and Origen was solemnly anathematised.

The Monophysites, or some of them, gave as a reason why they would not accept the decisions of Chalcedon, that

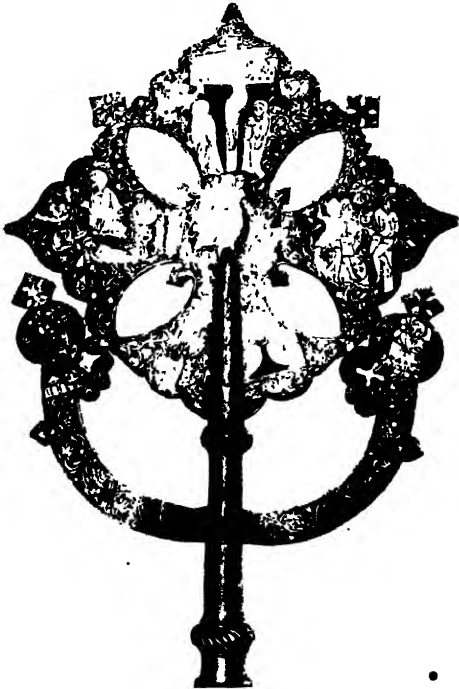
this council had not only not condemned but had virtually approved the views of Theodore of Mopsuesta, Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Bishop Ibas of Edessa, which were tainted with Nestorian heresy. In an evil moment Justinian was persuaded to clear the Chalcedonian party of this suspicion of sympathy with Nestorianism by issuing an edict in which he exposed and denounced the errors contained in the writings of Theodore of Mopsuesta generally, in the treatise of Theodoret against Cyril of Alexandria and in a letter to the Persian bishop Maris which was ascribed to Ibas of Edessa. This aroused a furious controversy, known as that of the 'Three Chapters,' the opposition being particularly strong in the Western church. In the end, in order to calm the tumult he had raised, the emperor decided to summon yet another general council. This met at Constantinople in 553, duly condemned the incriminated writings, and anathematised several other heretical



**AN EARLY MONOPHYSITE SANCTUARY**

Armenia officially accepted Christianity about A.D. 290. In the sixth century the Armenian church held to the Monophysite doctrine and established its centre at Echmiadzin, scene of the martyrdom of the virgin saint Hripsime, to whom this church is dedicated.

G. A. Rivoira, 'Moslem Architecture'



**AN ABYSSINIAN CHURCH RELIC**

Like its Coptic mother church in Armenia, the Abyssinian Church adheres to the doctrine of Monophysitism. This fine gilt bronze processional cross came from Abyssinia, but its workmanship betrays European influences.

British Museum

writers. Its decrees were accepted in the East; but in the West there was much opposition and the controversy there led to a schism which lasted for thirty years.

Justinian died in 565, without having succeeded in restoring unity to the Church, and it was not until seven years later that his son and successor, Justin II, took up the task once more and proceeded, in a quiet but systematic fashion, to suppress the Monophysite churches. He succeeded, to all outward appearance. But the triumph of the true faith was bought at a heavy cost. For when, during the last disastrous years of the reign of the emperor Heraclius, the Arab followers of Mahomet invaded the Empire their conquests were facilitated by the bitter divisions among the Christians, and they were even welcomed as deliverers by the innumerable 'heretics' who had groaned under the orthodox yoke.

Monophysitism, suppressed henceforward in what remained of the Empire of the Caesars, continued to exist, if not to flourish, beyond its borders. In Egypt, indeed, it had become as it were the



#### A JACOBITE SURVIVAL

Christianity reached India in the second century, and in the fourth the Church of Malabar was founded by Nestorian missionaries. In 1599 it accepted the Orthodox Catholic faith; but a little later a schismatical party joined the Jacobite Church and adopted the Jacobite rite.

*From Fortescue 'The Lesser Eastern Churches'*

symbol of a distinctive national consciousness, and it still remains the creed of the Coptic church and of its daughter church in Abyssinia. In Asia, too, it survived and still survives. The Armenian church from the first rejected the definition of Chalcedon, and remains Monophysite. In Syria and Asia Minor the missionary zeal of Jacob Baradaeus (the Beggar) succeeded in building up a mighty church, of which he was consecrated the first bishop about the year 543, known to the world as the Jacobite church, which for centuries championed the Monophysite faith against the Orthodox church on the one side and the Nestorian church on the other. This church, like the Nestorian, fell upon evil days, and during the nineteenth century the greater number of its adherents submitted to Rome and are now known as the Uniat Jacobites. The original Jacobite church is now represented by poor and scattered communities under a patriarch

who takes his title from Antioch, though he never resided there.

The luckless emperor Heraclius, whose reign began so brilliantly and ended in such overwhelming disaster, was very conscious of the effect of the religious dissensions in weakening the resisting power of the Empire, and he determined to make yet one more attempt to win over the persecuted Monophysites of Egypt and Syria. The formula of conciliation was suggested to him by the patriarch Sergius of Constantinople. Since the objection of the Monophysites to the established doctrine of the Two Natures arose from their conviction that this destroyed the vital unity of Christ's person, could this not be met by laying down that the Two Natures, while quite distinct in his One Person, had but one 'energy' or active operation? To the emperor, who knew more about soldiers than about theologians, this seemed a brilliant idea. In 622, during his march into Persia, he talked the matter over with the head of the Monophysite church in Armenia, with results so promising that, after his return from the victorious campaign, he continued the negotiations and finally, in 626, issued an edict forbidding any mention of 'two energies' in Christ.

At first the experiment seemed likely to succeed. The metropolitan, Cyrus of Phasis, convinced by the imperial arguments, was rewarded with the patriarchate of Alexandria, and in 633 he succeeded in reconciling the Monophysites of his province

**Heraclius issues an Exposition of Faith**

on the basis of recognizing in Christ's person 'one divine-human energy.' In spite of the opposition in Egypt of a Palestinian monk named Sophronius, all seemed to be going well, especially when Pope Honorius wrote friendly letters to the patriarch Sergius expressing agreement with his views. But Sophronius, who became patriarch of Jerusalem in 634, was not to be silenced, and the thunder of his denunciations of the new heresy of the 'one energy' raised so violent a storm that Heraclius found it necessary once more to intervene. In 638, accordingly, he issued an 'exposition of faith,' drawn up by Sergius, in which the use of the

phrase 'one energy' was forbidden, as seeming to the weaker brethren to conflict with the doctrine of the Two Natures, while the expression 'two energies' was likewise forbidden, as suggesting that Christ had two wills, whereas the orthodox doctrine was that Christ had but one.

This, of course, only made matters worse. Pope Honorius, whose name was for centuries to be included in the heretical black list of the Roman church, died this same year, and his immediate successors, Severinus and John IV, were sternly opposed to the Monothelite view (from the Greek 'monos,' one, and 'thelein,' to will). In Italy and Africa, too, the zeal of Maximus, abbot of Chrysopolis and formerly private secretary to the emperor Heraclius, stirred up so violent an agitation that, in 648, the emperor Constans II judged it wise to withdraw the edict of Heraclius and to issue instead a 'typus,' in which all discussion of the questions of the singleness or duality of either the energy or the will of Christ was forbidden under penalties, though those who had hitherto taken part in the controversy on either side were to be free from censure. The doctrines defined by the first four general councils, which left the points at issue vague, were to be maintained. So far from producing peace, however,

**Decisions of the Lateran Synod** this roused the church of Rome to fresh energy and in the following year a synod of Western bishops at the Lateran, presided over by Pope Martin, defined the doctrine of the Two Wills in unambiguous terms and condemned, *inter alia*, the Edict of Heraclius and the Typus of Constans.

This was an outrageous defiance of the imperial authority which could not be tolerated. At the emperor's command, Pope Martin was arrested by the soldiers of the exarch of Ravenna, sent as a prisoner to Constantinople, and ultimately banished to the Chersonese, where he died, in September 655, a few months after his arrival. A cruel persecution of the refractory followed, in the course of which Maximus too earned his titles of saint and confessor; and this persecution so far succeeded, that for some thirteen years no more was heard of the

question. With the accession of the emperor Constantine Pogonatus in 668, however, the controversy once more revived, and assumed such dimensions that he decided to submit the matter to a general council, to be held at Constantinople in 680. During the year before this council met a synod was assembled in Rome by Pope Agatho, by which it was decided not to suffer any modification of the decisions of the Lateran synod of 649. As for the main point at issue, the pope himself suggested the solution. 'The will,' he said, 'is the property of the nature, so that, as there are two natures, so there are two wills; but the human will ever determines itself in harmony with the divine will.' This view was endorsed by the Council of Constantinople, which anathematised those who had supported the Monothelite doctrine.

Thus, after six hundred years, the questions arising out of the belief in the union of the divine and human natures in Christ were settled, so

far as what is usually known as the Catholic Church is concerned. It

must not be forgotten, however, that this unity was only reached, as it was only to be maintained, by the extrusion of those who dissented from the views of the majority at any given time. The intrigues and violence which too often characterised the proceedings of the councils and so deprived them of much of their moral weight, and the fact that these councils had, at different times and under different influences, come to the most contradictory decisions, made it natural for those who differed from these decisions to dispute their authority, which was, in any case, not based on a long tradition of the Church. The 'heretical' churches, then, which refused to accept this or that conciliar definition of faith, must not be thought of as consciously dissenting from Catholic Christendom. On the contrary, they denied the names of Catholic and Orthodox to those who did accept the definition which they regarded as heretical, and claimed these names for themselves. 'Arians,' 'Nestorians,' 'Jacobites' and the rest existed only in the vocabulary of their opponents.



# TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XV

- 632 Abu Bekr first khalif. First Syrian expedition.  
633 Suppression of pretenders in Arabia. Khalid in Irak.  
634 Roman defeat on Vernerak. Omar khalif, to 644 Mothanna in Irak; battle of Boweib.  
635 Fall of Damascus.  
636 Yazdigird IV k. of Persia. Battle of Kadesia.  
636 Fall of Antioch. Heraclius evacuates Syria. Rothari Lombard king.  
637 Fall of Jerusalem and of Ctesiphon. Founding of Kufa and Basra.  
638 Dagobert k. of Franks dies. 'Rois faméants' from this time. Sigibert k. in Austrasia.  
639 Pepin the Old dies. Grimoald claims mayoralty Moawiya (Ommuad) governor of Syria.  
640 Amru invades Egypt.  
641 Heraclius dies. Constans II emperor. Amru takes Alexandria. Fostat (Cairo) founded. Chindaswinth k. of Visigoths to 652.  
642 Persian Empire ended at battle of Nehavend. Grimoald son of Pepin mayor, to 656.  
643 Rothari's Lombard Code.  
644 Omar assassinated; Othman khalif.  
646 Alexandria recovered and lost again.  
647 Amru in Egypt superseded by Abu Sarh. India: Harsha dies; Kanauj Empire breaks up.  
649 Beginning of Saracen fleet on the Mediterranean. 'Typus' of Constans; denounced by Pope Martin.  
651 Moawiya begins invasions of Asia Minor. Othman's recension of the Koran.  
652 Naval victory of Abu Sarh off Alexandria.  
655 Naval victory over Constans at Phoenix. Captivity and death of Pope Martin.  
656 Penda killed; Northumbrian supremacy in England.  
656 Othman murdered. Ali khalif to 660. Revolt of Zobeir and Talha. Battle 'of the Camel'.  
657 Fall of the mayor Grimoald; Neustria dominant.  
657 Moawiya and Ali in conflict; battle of Siffin.  
658 The 'Arbitration.' Rise of the Kharejites.  
658 Constans campaigns against Slavs; settlement.  
659 Truce between Moawiya and Constans.  
660 Ali killed. Moawiya khalif, Hasan resigning. Ommuad Khalifate to 750.  
660 Ebroin mayor of Neustria.  
662 Lombard crown usurped by Grimoald of Benevento. Constans invades Italy.  
663 Constans retires from Italy to Syracuse.  
664 Constans organizes campaigns in Africa.  
668 Constans killed; Constantine Pogonatus emperor. Renewal of war with Moawiya; Saracen successes in Asia Minor.  
671 Berthari Lombard king to 680.  
672 Second siege of Constantinople; Saracens repulsed.  
672-677 Defeats of Saracens by Constantine.  
678 Moawiya has his son Yazid elected as successor.  
678 Moawiya forced to make peace with Constantine. Ebroin's supremacy over Franks established.  
679 Bulgar kingdom established in Moesia.  
680 Decline of Visigoth monarchy. Yazid I succeeds Moawiya. Fall of Husein, son of Ali, at Kerbela.  
681 Abdallah Ibn Zobeir claims Khalifate at Mecca. (Church) Council of Constantinople condemns the Monothelite heresy. Rome reconciled.  
681 Ebroin killed. Seven years of civil war.  
683 Yazid's army takes and sacks Medina. Mecca saved by Yazid's death. Moawiya II, then Merwan, khalif at Damascus, Abdallah at Mecca.  
685 Abdallah's lieutenants overcome Shiabs and Kharejites at Kufa and Basra.  
685 English invasion broken by Scots; Nechtansmere.  
686 Constantine dies. Justinian II emperor.  
686 Merwan killed. Abd el-Malik Ommuad khalif.  
687 Pepin the Young, grandson of Pepin the Old, wins battle of Testry over Neustrians.  
687-714 Pepin rules the Franks as mayor of east and west; recovers lost authority over Germans on the east, West Frisia, Thuringia, Swabia; develops Christian missions among German pagans; establishes central control.  
688 Cunibert Lombard king to 700.  
689 Hajjaj for Abd el-Malik wrests Irak from Abdallah.  
690 S. Willibrord 'apostle of Frisia', to 690.  
691 'Abd el-Malik's troops besiege Abdallah in Mecca. Justinian's successful campaign in Bulgaria.  
692 Fall of Abdallah. Abd el-Malik sole khalif.  
693 Justinian's campaign in Cilicia; Sebastopolis.  
695 Justinian deposed and exiled. Leontius emperor.  
698 Saracens finally capture Carthage. Continuous progress of Musa in Mauretania.  
Leontius deposed. Tiberius III emperor.  
701 Aribert (to 711) usurps Lombard crown.  
705 Return and restoration of Justinian II. Reign of terror to 711.  
Walid succeeds Abd el-Malik; to 715.  
709 Koteiba captures Bokhara.  
710 Roderic, last Visigothic king of Spain.  
711 Philippicus kills Justinian and usurps crown. Saracens under Tarik invade Spain and annihilate Spanish-Gothic army on the Guadalete. End of Visigothic dominion. Saracens overrun all Spain; resistance maintained only in N.W.  
Saracen fleet takes possession of Sardinia.  
Saracens under Kasim subjugate Sindh.  
Saracen armies invade Asia Minor, which they overrun in the next four years.  
712 Kobeida takes Samarkand.  
Luitprand Lombard k.; he consolidates the realm.  
713 Fall of Philippicus. Anastasius II emperor. China: Accession of Lung Chi, to 703. Forty years of prosperity.  
715 Walid dies. Suleiman khalif.  
Fall of Anastasius. Theodosius III emperor. Austrasian mayoralty disputed on Pepin's death. Gregory II pope to 731.  
716 Neustrians attack Austrasians, who find a leader in Charles Martel, son of Pepin. Four years of civil war.  
Suleiman prepares grand attack on the Empire. Revolt of Leo the Isaurian.  
717 Theodosius abdicates in favour of Leo III. Moslemah, brother of Suleiman, besieges Constantinople by sea and land. Leo defeats fleet.  
Omar II succeeds Suleiman.  
718 Saracens reinforced. Leo shatters their fleet, crosses Bosphorus, and cuts communications. Bulgarians advance and defeat a Saracen army. Moslemah withdraws his remnants over the Dardanelles and cuts his way to Cilicia. Remnant of grand fleet destroyed in a storm.  
East Europe delivered from the Saracen menace.  
719 Campaigns to expel Saracens from Asia Minor. Charles Martel, after victories of Vincennes and Soissons, mayor of east and west to 741. Ascendancy of Austrasia. Charles returns a Meroving puppet king.  
720 Yazid II succeeds Omar II. Depravity of the Ommuad court and rivalry of factions.  
720-730 Charles restores authority in Trans-Rhenish dominions, lost during the civil wars.  
721 Saracens, having mastered Spain, invade Aquitaine but are routed by Duke Eudo at Toulouse.  
723 Boniface (Winfrith) 'apostle of Germany' made bishop for Germany by Gregory II, under protection of Charles Martel.  
724 Hisham succeeds Yazid II (to 743). Yemenite and Syrian factions, and Shiabs, and a secret Abbasid propaganda.  
725 Saracens overrun Septimania but league with Eudo.  
726 Leo III ('Iconoclast') prohibits image worship. His officers cannot enforce edict in Italy; violent breach with Pope Gregory.  
727 Saracen defeat at Nicaea drives them from Asia Minor. Charles Martel subjugates Bavaria.  
729 Exarch Eutychius marches on Rome, while Luitprand is enforcing obedience in the south.  
730 Luitprand imposes pacification of Italy, which leaves Gregory virtually independent.  
Revolt of Swabia stamped out by Charles Martel.  
731 Othman in Septimania revolts against Abd er-Rahman in Spain, Eudo against Charles. Othman is crushed; Eudo submits.  
732 Gregory III pope. Leo's fleet for subjugation of Italy destroyed by storms.  
Abd er-Rahman invades and conquers Aquitaine, routing Eudo; but he is killed and his host shattered by Charles Martel at decisive battle of Poitiers (or Tours).  
West Europe delivered from the Saracen menace.

## Chronicle XV

# ISLAM'S GREAT CENTURY OF CONQUEST: 632-732

**T**HE dominating feature of the hundred years whose story is recorded in this Chronicle is the sudden and unprecedented expansion in the East of a newly organized and semi-barbaric but militant religious community into a conquering world power. In Europe, on the other hand, we have to watch the continuation of the process that was dominant in our last Chronicle, the disintegration of the old order and the emerging of the bases of a new order.

Among the followers of the Prophet there was none whom he trusted more completely or more deservedly than Abu Bekr and Omar. He had not, however, definitely nominated any successor. He left no heir of his body; but, if the headship of the Faithful was to go by heredity, Ali, his daughter Fatima's husband, was the obvious and, in fact, the only claimant. Practically the decision lay with the chiefs who were present at Medina when the Prophet died; they ignored the theory of heredity and chose the man whose record and character carried the most weight, Abu Bekr, the father of Mahomet's youngest and favourite wife, Ayesha.

### **Abu Bekr Secures the Khalifate**

**T**HERE was no lack of pretenders to the succession which had been fixed by the arbitrary action of one group among many. By the skill of Abu Bekr's lieutenants and by the khalif's own tact the tribal jealousies were all rapidly suppressed; the more readily, perhaps, because he did not allow them to interfere with the immediate execution of Mahomet's project of conquest. One army was dispatched to Syria, another to the lower Euphrates—Mesopotamia or Irak—where the population was largely Arabic and had no love for its Persian rulers; tiny forces indeed to launch against the might of Persia and the might of Rome simultaneously, at a moment when it was at

least doubtful whether Arabia was to hold together or break in fragments.

But the revolts were suppressed, not without ruthlessness, but also not without generosity; and in 633 reinforcements were dispatched to both fronts, under Abu Obeida to Syria, and under Khalid, surnamed 'The Sword of Allah,' to Irak.

Persia was rent by dynastic turmoils; but the satrap Hormuz could bring into the field a force much larger than Khalid's 20,000. Nevertheless the Persians were routed in three successive engagements in March, April and May. The story runs that in the third battle, of Allis, and the pursuit, seventy thousand prisoners were collected and then massacred in cold blood in the dry bed of a canal, known thenceforth as the River of Blood. Khalid then proceeded to reduce the Hira province on the west of the Euphrates.

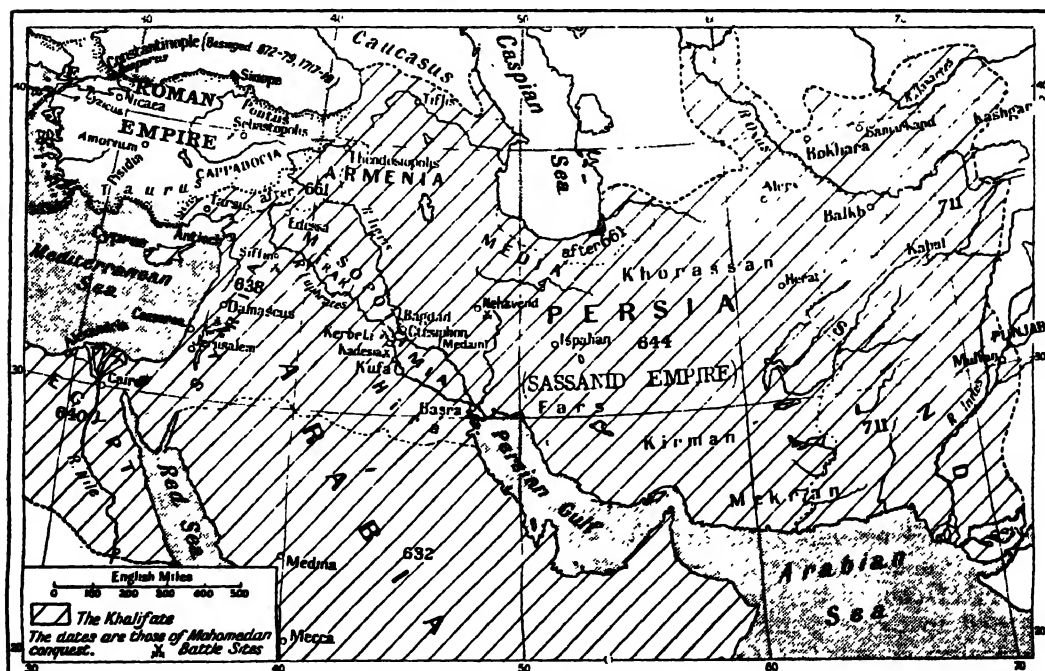
### **Syria abandoned to the Saracens**

**T**HE armies in Syria were meeting with no such brilliant successes. The Roman forces were mustering and the Arab or Saracen captains were not so enterprising as Khalid. The opposing battalions lay so long facing each other and doing nothing more, on an extended front, the Romans of course being much the more numerous, that Khalid with half his men was transferred in 634, with his work in Irak uncompleted, to Syria. The veterans who took part in the great Persian campaigns of Heraclius, not ten years earlier, had been for the most part disbanded; the new levies were of poor quality; the presence of Khalid was an inspiration; and in the late summer the Saracens won a crushing victory on the Yermak.

Next year Damascus fell. Heraclius once more took the field in person, but he had become hopelessly enfeebled by disease; the supreme and magnificent effort of the Persian war had been followed by reaction, besides leaving the Empire



From Egypt the Saracens spread in a westward direction over the whole of the North African littoral, securing control of the Mediterranean. In 711 a Saracen host crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and, after a stubbornly contested battle on the Guadalete, overran the whole of the Iberian Peninsula. Their further advance over Europe was finally stayed in Aquitaine in 732 by Charles Martel, 'mayor of the palace' to the Frankish king, who drove them back across the Pyrenees.



How rapidly and over how large an area Mahomet's dream of world-conquest was carried into effect in the century following his death is shown graphically in these two maps. Restricted to Arabia in 632, Islam absorbed first Syria and then Egypt and, later, Armenia to the Caucasus. By their victory at Nehavend in 642 the Saracens won the whole of Persia, and thereafter extended their dominion eastward and north-eastward to the Indus and the Jaxartes.

#### ISLAM'S CONQUESTS IN EUROPE AND ASIA IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

## Islam's Great Century of Conquest

desperately crippled; and in 636 the emperor abandoned Syria, emphasising the completeness of the defeat by carrying with him to Constantinople the True Cross, which, after his triumph over the Persians, had been once more enshrined at Jerusalem. Antioch and Jerusalem itself fell in 637, and the capture of the great port of Caesarea in 640 completed the conquest of Syria.

Equally decisive were the operations against Persia. Mothanna, the very able commander, left by the withdrawal of Khalid with a very small force, could only maintain himself with extreme difficulty, and was barely able to extricate a remnant of the troops from a disaster brought upon them by a captain who had been sent to supersede him. For Mothanna was only a Beduin chief, under whom neither the Companions of the Prophet nor the great families of Medina would condescend to serve.

Perhaps because he was a Beduin, Mothanna made his appeal not to the religion but to the patriotism, the sense of common nationality, of the Beduins of the Mesopotamian region. On that score he was able to add to his little force Christian tribes who refused to renounce their faith, by whose aid he won a brilliant victory at Boweib. Shortly after, however, he died, just as a new commander, Zaid, was arriving with new levies.

It was Zaid who directed the campaign of 635, in which was fought the decisive three-days' action of Kadesia, an overwhelming victory, though almost until the close of the third day the issue was extremely doubtful. The Persian field army was shattered, and the way was open for the conquest of Mesopotamia. In the summer of 636 Zaid was able to advance on Medain (Ctesiphon), the Persian capital, lying on both sides of the Tigris. Early in 637 Ctesiphon fell, and the Persian king and empire were driven behind the mountain barrier on the east of the great river.



### CONQUEROR OF CHOSROES

East Roman emperor from 610 to 641, Heraclius' reign, troubled by war and theological dissension, ended with the Empire menaced by the rising flood of Islam.

*British Museum*

The khalif Omar, who had succeeded Abu Bekr some two and a half years before, was minded to organize the conquests that had been made rather than to push farther afield. The subjugation of northern Syria and of upper Mesopotamia, completed during the next three years, was only giving the necessary finish to what had been done when the capture of Ctesiphon in the east balanced the capture of Jerusalem in the west. The Taurus on one side and the Perso-Median mountains on the other would be the natural bounds between the Saracen Empire and the empires of Persia and Rome.

By 640 those bounds had been attained; the Saracen dominion covered all that had ever owned the sway of Babylon or Assyria, save Egypt. But circumstances were too strong for the khalif's policy. Egypt was a bait too valuable to be resisted, and Persian rather than Arab aggression forced his hand in the east. Both Egypt and Persia had been annexed before his death in 644.

The conquest of Egypt in fact presented no very serious difficulty. The population of the Nile basin, as distinct from the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria, had no affection for the Empire, being strongly addicted to the Monophysite heresy, which orthodox Byzantium sought to repress. Moreover, since it was mainly from Egypt that the Empire obtained its central corn-supply, the Egyptian cultivator was systematically exploited for the requirements of the imperial government. An Arab conquest would merely mean a change of task-masters. On the other hand, the possession of Egypt would be invaluable, both as an immediate source of wealth and as crippling the Empire.

In 640, when Caesarea had fallen, and Syria, under its governor, the Ommiad Moawiya (Muavia), no longer offered promise of distinction, one of the commanders, Amru, obtained a somewhat reluctant permission from Omar to invade

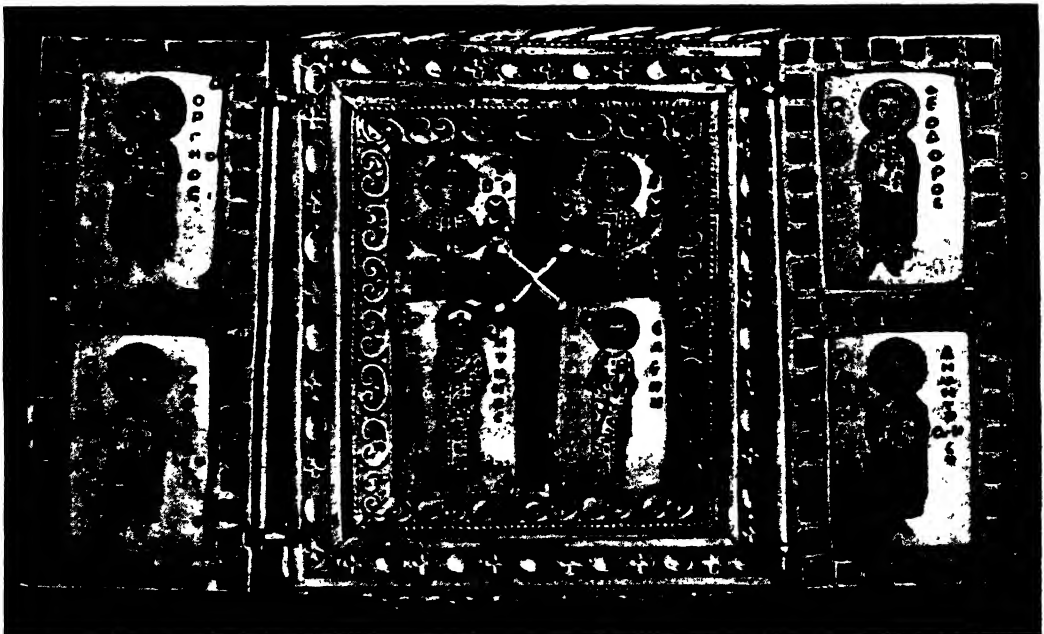
Egypt. A force of sixteen thousand men proved sufficient to effect the conquest, finishing with the capifulation of Alexandria, in 641, with little serious fighting, the dying Heraclius making no effort for its relief.

So when the news came in 641 that the Persian king, Yezdigird, was mustering from every province of his empire a vast army of invasion, Omar took up the challenge, and was hardly restrained from himself assuming the command of the force he raised to smite the Persian. In 642 at the battle of Nehavend thirty thousand Mahomedans shattered and scattered a Persian army of five times their numbers. Even then Yezdigird the Unlucky refused to come to terms, and, though driven perpetually from pillar to post, maintained the hopeless struggle for nearly ten years, until his death in 651. But Nehavend had decided the issue. Persia had been won for Islam. Yezdigird was the last of her Sassanid kings.

The great Omar fell in 644 beneath the dagger of an assassin who then slew him-

self—the victim of a purely personal vindictiveness. The policy of expansion to which he committed himself only in his last years was continued under his successors in the Khalifate. While Othman ruled at Medina (644-656), the conquest and incorporation of Persia were carried to the Oxus. Amru, the conqueror of Egypt, annexed the Cyrenaica, or Barca and Tripolis, pushing along the Mediterranean littoral. The regency at Constantinople (the emperor at the time being a young boy) put forth a great effort soon after Omar's death, and recaptured Alexandria, which Amru was only able to recover after a year's siege (646). Six years later the attempt was repeated; but this time it was defeated by the Saracen fleet which had been created in the interval by Amru's successor, Abu Sarh.

Moawiya in Syria had long ago urged on Omar the necessity of a fleet; but to him the idea had seemed a tempting of Providence. Othman, however, proved more amenable. A fleet was built, manned by Syrian and Egyptian sailors and Arab



**PIECE OF THE TRUE CROSS RECOVERED BY HERACLIUS FROM THE PERSIANS**

After the defeat, deposition and assassination of Chosroes in 628, Heraclius signed a treaty of peace with the Persian Siroes, including in its terms the restitution of the true wood of the Holy Cross. In the following year Heraclius made a personal pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and the relic was restored to the Holy Sepulchre. A fragment of the true cross, brought probably from Constantinople about 1155, is enshrined in this enameled gold triptych now in the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

*From 'Archæologia,' by permission of the Society of Antiquaries and the Pierpont-Morgan Library*

## Islam's Great Century of Conquest

warriors. In 649 it effected the capture of Cyprus, Abu Sarh being one of the commanders ; again under his command it won the victory which drove the imperial fleet from Alexandria in 652 ; and in 655 it crowned its successes by inflicting a decisive defeat on the Byzantine fleet off Phoenix on the Lycian coast, in the heaviest sea-fight since Actium.

The revival of Byzantine activity under the regency was not confined to the effort at Alexandria. In 646 a Byzantine force invaded Syria from Asia Minor. Omar's embargo on aggressive movement beyond the borders was no longer operative, and Moawiya not only repelled the attack but carried the war into the enemy's country. Troops from Syria raided farther and farther into Asia Minor in successive years, pushing nearer and nearer to the western limit of Asia, while the security of Europe itself was threatened by the passing of the command of the eastern Mediterranean into the hands of the Saracen fleet.

Thus much had been or was being achieved on the western side when, in 656, the murder of Othman and the acceptance of the Khalifate by Ali the twice disappointed brought to a head the family jealousies and tribal rivalries which threatened Islam with disruption, and immediately developed into a war of contending factions. Moawiya, who was to be one of the leading figures in the fight, made haste to arrange a truce with the Eastern emperor, to whom a respite from the Saracen war was more than welcome. For a time the expansion of Islam was suspended by civil war.

### Dissension in the Ranks of Islam

THE initial strength of Islam lay in the unity created by Mahomet, and with difficulty preserved by the great qualities of the first two khalifs. But no satisfactory scheme of appointment to the Khalifate, on which the whole system of Islam centred, had been devised. Personal prestige had carried the day for Abu Bekr and Omar, to whose fidelity, moderation and organizing ability Islam was deeply indebted. But on Omar's death and the flat refusal of the successor on whom his own choice had fallen, the

committee of selection had chosen the least competent of their number, the septuagenarian Othman, whose strongest recommendation was that he was Mahomet's son-in-law.

Othman was of the Ommiad family, to which also belonged Moawiya, the governor of Syria ; a house whose favour was deeply resented by many, since it had for many years headed the Meccan hostility to Mahomet, though itself of the Koreish tribe to which the Prophet himself belonged. Disaffection, then, spread among the old Companions of the Prophet on the one hand and on the other among the Beduin chiefs who always resented the priority of the Koreish.

### War between Ali and Moawiya

THE head and front of Othman's offending was the unpopularity and the arrogance of his governors at Kufa, at Basra and in Egypt ; but additional ground for complaint was found in his issuing a revision of the Koran, and additional encouragement to disaffection in his obvious weakness in dealing with the disloyal elements. The most prominent of the Companions at Medina, Ali, Zobeir and Talha, flattered themselves that they were loyal, but when the crisis came in 656 their display of loyalty was of a most perfunctory character. They offered no effective resistance to a long-prepared insurrection at Medina, in which the aged khalif was cruelly done to death ; and the insurgents, before they left the city, compelled Ali to assume the Khalifate. The immediate result was civil war.

The insurrection had been jointly organized from Kufa, Basra and Egypt, but each had chosen a different candidate. Ali was the choice of the Egyptian group who carried the affair through. Zobeir and Talha, old Companions both, gave their allegiance to Ali ; but were soon in open rebellion urged on by Ayesha, Mahomet's widow, who detested Ali. The pretext was Ali's failure to punish Othman's murderers, which Moawiya in Syria too made a ground for refusing allegiance. Apart from Syria there were four factions, Basra, Kufa, the regicides who had actually made Ali khalif, and those who adhered to Ali as

loyalists. Kufa came over to Ali, but none of the parties could really be reconciled with the regicides, who broke up attempted negotiations lest they should find all the rest making common cause against them. Near Basra they forced a fierce engagement, known as the 'battle of the camel,' because the camel and litter of Ayesha were the centre of the hottest fighting, between Ali and the rebels. The khalif was victorious; both Talha and Zobeir were killed; but it was the victory not of

overreached Musa, so that the judgement which should have deposed both Ali and Moawiya actually deposed only the former, six months after the suspension of hostilities—and the conflict remained in suspense. Moawiya had a colourable pretext for claiming that he was khalif, but it was not his policy to attack his rival directly; while Ali not only viewed civil war with reluctance, but was also hampered by the development among his former followers of a fanatically puritan sect called the Kharejites, who wished to abolish the Khalifate and set up an impossible theocracy.

Their number was small, but though they were temporarily crushed at Nehrwan they were not extirpated. The result was that three of the zealots resolved to assassinate both the khalifs (who had come to an agreement) and Amru, lest the last should succeed to the Khalifate. Amru escaped altogether; Moawiya survived the attack and recovered; but Ali's wound was mortal (560).

His elder son Hasan, a feeble creature, succeeded him, but very soon abdicated in favour of Moawiya, who thus became sole khalif and founder of the Ommiad dynasty (661).

Formal unity having been restored, Moawiya reigned unchallenged till his death in 680. It was his ambition to make the Khalifate hereditary in his own family; and to that end, four years before he died, he procured the nomination of his son Yezid as his successor.

It has been noted that at the beginning of the troubles Moawiya arranged a truce with the Empire. The pacification set him free to renew the policy of expansion. This was at first directed to the African littoral. In 663 the Saracen advance captured Carthage but was driven back again to Tripolis. But Moawiya's forces were soon operating in Asia Minor, the emperor Constans II being fully occupied in the west till he was assassinated in 668. The new emperor Constantine IV



## EMPERORS WHO STAYED THE MARCH OF ISLAM

Constans II (left), emperor 642-68, and his son and successor Constantine IV, were both capable rulers. The former checked the Arab advance in Africa, the latter repelled the Saracens' successive assaults upon Constantinople. The beard which gave him his sobriquet 'Pogonatus' is well shown in this coin.

*British Museum*

order represented by the khalif himself but of his allies, the regicides and the ever-turbulent Kufa.

Moawiya then was the one positive rival. The supreme authority of the khalif was essential to Islam, but Ali had been raised to the Khalifate by the murderers of the legitimate khalif Othman. He could not be recognized till he dissociated himself from and crushed the forces of anarchy, to which the victory of Basra had in effect only attached him the more closely. Moawiya was strong in having at his side Amru, the conqueror of Egypt. Ali, the least vindictive of men, desired not war but peace, but he could not simply acquiesce in Moawiya's defiance.

He marched against Moawiya. Negotiations were opened while skirmishes went on; then a severe but indecisive battle was fought at Siffin. Then both sides agreed to refer the question to the authority of the Koran, with Amru and Musa, the governor of Kufa, as judges. Amru



## Islam's Great Century of Conquest

Pogonatus was only eighteen, and for some time Moawiya's arms met with success. In 673 he was in possession of the Asiatic shore of the Sea of Marmora and laid siege to Constantinople itself. Then the tide turned. The Byzantine fleet, armed with a new weapon, presumably some kind of explosive, known as Greek fire, recovered the mastery of the sea and drove off the Saracens. In 678 Moawiya had to sue for peace, and the hostilities were again suspended for several years. If conquest had been checked in the West after some striking successes, in the East the power of the Saracens had made itself felt both in Khorassan and on the borders of India. But the accession of Yezid (680-683) inaugurated a fresh period of civil discord which continued for five and twenty years.

### Troublous Reign of Yezid I

**Y**EZID'S reign began with tragedy. There was no precedent for the manner of his appointment. A strong backing was to be expected for the claims of Husain, the second of Ali's sons and Mahomet's grandsons, and also for Abdallah the son of Zobeir. Both were at Mecca. Unhappily, Husain was induced by the expectation of support from Kufa to march thither with his family and a very small group of adherents. The Beduins who joined him on the way deserted as soon as they learnt that no help was forthcoming from Kufa, which was in the iron grip of its governor, Obeidullah. An overwhelming force was sent out to arrest Husain. To fight was madness, but a madness which he preferred to the unconditional surrender demanded of him. He and his little band sold their lives dearly; but they were all cut to pieces, among them two of his sons, two sons of Hasan, and six brothers. The women were treated with honour, and the youngest son was spared. But seventy heads were carried in to Obeidullah.

The slaughter was quite unnecessary, for Husain had offered to surrender on condition that he should be sent to Yezid at Damascus, the residence of the Syrian khalifs. Yezid denounced Obeidullah and repudiated his action. But the

thing was done. The seed of the Prophet had been all but extirpated at Kerbela on the tenth day of the month Moharram, and the Ommiad khalif was responsible for the deed his minister had perpetrated. A shudder ran through the whole Mahomedan world, and of Husain's martyrdom a creed was born, the creed of the divine right of the seed of the Prophet to the Khalifate; the creed which was to split Islam in twain between the Shiah party who adhered to it and the Sunnis who rejected it.

Medina and Mecca, the nursery and the sanctuary of Islam, refused to recognize Yezid; Mecca proclaimed Abdallah. In 683 Yezid's army stormed and sacked Medina ruthlessly, and Mecca was on the verge of suffering the same fate when Yezid died. The Syrian army retired when Abdallah rejected the overtures of its chief, whose share in the sack of Medina the men of the old school would not forgive. Kufa acknowledged Abdallah, while Syria sought out a new Ommiad, Merwan. Broadly speaking, the main cleavage was between Syria and Irak; but of the two Irakian centres Basra was rent by the remnant of the Kharejite zealots and Kufa by the new Shiah sect, which would acknowledge no khalif save one of the seed of the Prophet. At the same time, what was left of the old believers betook themselves to Africa, where the advance had again become active since the death of Constantine Pogonatus in 685. The absorption of Numidia and Mauretania prepared the way for a further geographical cleavage of Islam.

### The Ommiad Dynasty restored

**A**BDALLAH IBN ZOBEIR maintained himself at Mecca till 691. In Syria Merwan was murdered in 685, but he had already secured the succession of his son Abd el-Malik (685-705), who turned on Irak, and in a very short time crushed or won over the supporters of Abdallah. Then his famous general Hajjaj in 691 renewed the attack on Abdallah at Mecca which had been broken off by the death of Yezid eight years before. Mecca was again besieged, but was saved from impending

destruction when Abdallah, in a desperate sally, was slain (692) at the head of his small band. With the fall of Abdallah, resistance ended.

Once more there was a single Ommiad khalif, Abd el-Malik, the inventor of the capitation tax upon Christians throughout the Khalifate. But though order and control were gradually restored, insurrections were constant. On the other hand, marked progress was made in the African advance. Carthage was finally taken in 698, and as the Arabs slowly gained the mastery over the Berbers, Numidians and Moors, these tribesmen became foremost in their Mahomedan zeal. When Abd el-Malik died in 705, Islam was already casting greedy glances towards the shore of Spain. But before carrying further the story of Islam, we must again take up the tale of the West.

### Fortunes of the Heraclian House

WHEN Heraclius died in 641, he was succeeded by two sons, Heraclius Constantinus and Heracleonas. The elder died almost immediately; his ten-year-old son, variously known as Constans II or Constantine IV, was associated with Heracleonas as emperor; in 642 Heracleonas died, and the boy Constans became sole emperor. During his minority the

government was conducted by the Senate. The truce between Moawiya and Constans, brought about by the death of Othman, enabled the emperor to devote himself to the affairs of Italy, on which he was mainly engaged till his death in 668.

Before departing for the West, however, the young emperor reorganized the governments in Asia Minor. He had already attempted to enforce a compromise, known as 'the Type,' in the Monothelite controversy (see Chap. 88), which met with the usual ill-success of such efforts, embittered the parties, and caused a violent breach with the Roman Pope Martin, who had in consequence been in effect kidnapped and carried off into exile in the Crimea, where he died. Rome on this question was in agreement with the Orthodox in the East; but the affair intensified the antagonism between the pretensions of Rome to spiritual supremacy and the claims of the imperial patriarchate at the Eastern capital.

Constans apparently had the design of restoring the imperial supremacy in Italy, now dominated by the Lombard kingdom in the north and the Lombard dukes in the south. Rothari, duke of Brescia, had succeeded to the Lombard crown in 636. He had completed the subjugation of the north and narrowed the boundaries of the imperial exarchate at Ravenna, and he reduced the laws and customs of the Lombards to a written code. His reign (636-652) gave promise of consolidation which was wrecked by his death. Ten years later the crown was seized by Grimoald, duke of Benevento, who set his son Romoald in control of the south; and it was in these circumstances that Constans set out on his Italian expedition in 662.

In the campaign of 663 Constans overran South Italy and visited Rome; but then, without attacking the northern kingdom, he retired unmolested through the south and took up his headquarters at Syracuse.



HAVOC LEFT BY CONQUERING ISLAM

These ruins of a Byzantine basilica are a memorial of the Carthage that was a stronghold of early Christianity in Africa. Belisarius in 533 recovered the city to the Byzantine Empire from its Vandal conquerors, but in 647 the Arabs swept into North Africa and in 698 burned Carthage to the ground.

*Photo, G. R. Ballance*

## Islam's Great Century of Conquest

From that base he directed the African campaigns which recovered the recently captured Carthage from the Saracens and drove them back to Tripoli. But his merciless exactions from the Sicilians and south Italians for the expenses of the war alienated the populations.

In 668 Constans was murdered at Syracuse by a slave who was probably the instrument of a conspiracy. He was succeeded by his son Constantine IV (668-685), as yet a beardless youth, though he soon acquired on campaign a beard which won him the nickname Pogonatus, 'the bearded.' After suppressing a usurper at Syracuse who had tried to make his own profit out of the murder of Constans, the young emperor plunged into the war which Moawiya, now sole and undisputed khalif, had recently renewed in Asia Minor. His armies were at first so far unsuccessful that in 673 the Saracens opened the siege of Constantinople. At that point, however, the tide turned. The Saracens were forced to retire to Cyzicus on the Asiatic shore of the Sea of Marmora, their fleets were constantly beaten off, and in 678 Constantine imposed a peace which established his high reputation.

At about the same time, however, Bulgaria came into being as a kingdom. The Slavs had long been in occupation of Moesia. To expel them had proved impossible, and Constans had made terms with them which practically left them independent. The Bulgars had then crossed the Danube in force, dominated the Slavs, and were now rapidly amalgamating with them. Constantine recognized the Bulgarian kingdom in 679.

In the next year a general council of the churches, Eastern and Western, was held at Constantinople, which finally banned the Monothelite heresy.

**A**FTER the death of Constantine the Bearded in 685, the Empire fell on evil days. The young emperor, Justinian II, who was deposed in 695, restored in 705



### LAST OF THE HERACLIAN DYNASTY

Justinian II was born in 669 and came to the throne in 685. A brilliant but tempestuous and vindictive man, he was deposed and banished to the Crimea in 695, but recovered his throne in 705 and thereafter indulged in an orgy of cruelty, ended by his own murder in 711.

*British Museum*

and killed in 711, was not unlike the English King John; for he had brilliant abilities which he exercised spasmodically, but was too completely the slave of his own passions, vindictiveness in particular, to be able to preserve what he won.

A successful campaign against the Bulgarians in 690 excited his military ambitions, and in 693 he picked a quarrel with Abd el-Malik, whose rival Abdallah Ibn Zobeir had been slain a year before. Justinian invaded Syria through the Taurus, only to meet with an overwhelming defeat at Sebastopolis; where he was deserted by a number of his forced levies, for whose defection he took a strange revenge by slaughtering their comrades who had remained loyal. Meanwhile his ministers at Constantinople had been extorting monstrous taxes by monstrous methods; and he himself had been dealing so drastically with generals who met with reverses that one who had hitherto been successful, Leontius, revolted in 695, seized his person, slit his nose—an ingenious method of disfigurement that had recently come into vogue—and sent him off to imprisonment in the Crimea.

Leontius was deposed in 698 by officers returning from Africa, who were afraid of paying the penalty for the loss of Carthage, just captured by the Saracens. They slit his nose, shut him up in a monastery, and made Tiberius III emperor (698-705). He fought some successful campaigns against the Saracens and penetrated into northern

Syria. But in 705 Justinian escaped from the Crimea, got help from the king of Bulgaria, was received into Constantinople by traitors, seized the palace, resumed the diadem, and put to death both Leontius and Tiberius, after treading on their necks as they lay bound and prostrate before him. He then indulged in an orgy of indiscriminating cruelty, which was only ended by a military insurrection headed by the general, Philippicus, and his own death at the hands of the soldiery in 711. So ended the house of Heraclius.

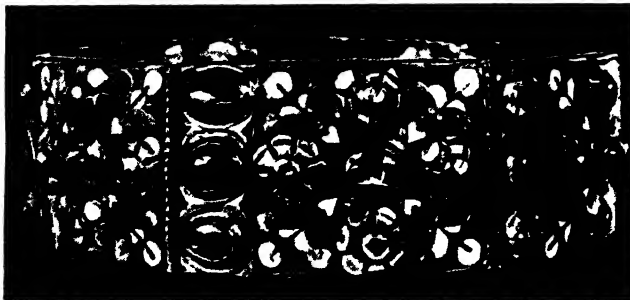
**I**N Italy Grimoald usurped the Lombard crown, as we have seen, in 662, expelling the young heir, Berthari. His rule was vigorous; he checked the threatened attack of Constans in the north; he repelled invasions of the Avars and Franks; he maintained friendly relations with the Papacy. On his death in 672 the Lombards recalled Berthari, a mild and religious prince, who reigned peaceably and benevolently till his death. His son Cunibert (688-700) had much trouble with rebellious dukes. When he died the crown was snatched from his young son by his cousin Aribert of Turin (701-711), who in his turn was overthrown by the adherents of the old royal family, so that in 712 the Lombard crown fell to Liutprand (712-743), probably the ablest of all the Lombard kings.

In the Frankish kingdom the power had in the meantime passed for ever from the

royal house of the Merwings; though a succession of phantoms continued to occupy the throne, crowned usually when children, and surviving only long enough to beget a boy or two to keep up the phantom line of the 'rois fainéants,' the 'do-nothing kings.' Sigibert, the first of the fainéants, succeeded Dagobert, the last effective Merwing, in 638. Next year died Pepin the Old, whose son Grimoald claimed to succeed him as mayor of the palace, and made good his claim by force of arms. But when, on Sigibert's death in 656, he tried to set his own son on the Austrasian throne, the Franks would not displace the old dynasty. It was the Neustrian mayor of the palace, Ebroin, who secured the supremacy, and ruled tyrannically till 670, when he was overthrown and thrust into a monastery by a coalition of Austrasian and Neustrian nobles and bishops. But he broke out again some years later when the reigning king, Childeric, died, got his own Merwing nominee, Theuderich, on to the throne, and again ruled as a tyrant till he was murdered in 671. Then after seven years of constant strife, Pepin the Younger nephew of Grimoald and grandson both of Pepin the Old and Arnulf of Metz, established himself as mayor of the palace for both Austrasia and Neustria, while he still left Theuderich III titular king of all the Franks. The king did not count.

On Pepin's death the succession to the mayoralty was secured after a four years' struggle by his (illegitimate) son Charles Martel (the Hammer), who reigned from 719 to 741, and thoroughly established the Arnulfing dynasty, though it was only in the reign of his son that it assumed the regal title and the name Carolingian, by which it is known.

Meanwhile the Visigothic kingdom was making the way easy for the power which was preparing to supersede it. Two only of the many kings who reigned between 631 and 711 were men of capacity and vigour. The first was Chindaswinth (641-652), who was verg-



**THE IRON CROWN OF LOMBARDY**

Made for Agilulf, king of the Lombards, in 591, this iron crown was used in the coronation of all Lombard kings and all Holy Roman Emperors who were also kings of Lombardy. The interior is said to be hammered from a nail of the true cross. The jewelled exterior was added about 1100.

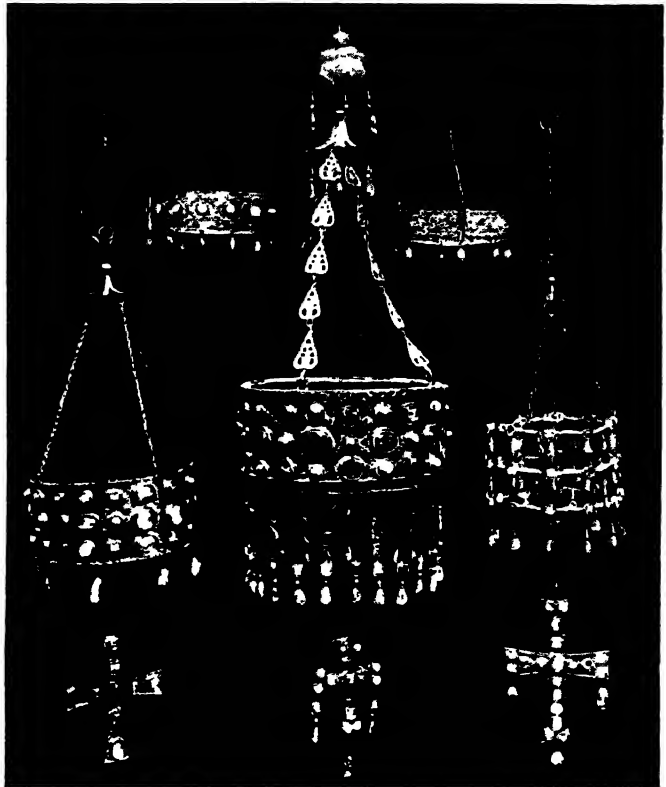
*Photo, Alinari*

## Islam's Great Century of Conquest

ing on eighty when he was elected, but displayed all the energy of a ripe middle age in reducing the turbulent nobles to obedience, and enabled his son to rule peaceably for twenty years after his death. The election then fell upon Wamba (672-680), who was again forced to smite the rebellious nobles with a heavy hand in the first year of his reign, but was thereafter able to rule in peace. With these two exceptions every one of the kings, both before and after them, was more occupied with conciliating the clergy than with the governance of the land. The last of the series was Roderic, elected in 710, who lost his life in the cataclysm of 711.

**G**REAT was the glory of Islam in the days of the khalif Walid (705-715), and evil were those days in the history of the Christian Empire. For in the year of Walid's accession Justinian II recovered his crown, and when he had regained power used it only to play the tyrant. In 711 Philippicus slew him and made himself emperor after the evil precedent set by the mutineers who had made Phocas emperor a century earlier. In that same year the Saracens destroyed the Visigothic kingdom and laid the foundation of the Moorish dominion in Spain, not to be eliminated till all but eight centuries had gone by. Also in that year their fleets descended on Sardinia and tore from the Empire the most westerly province which still acknowledged its sovereignty.

Two years later another conspiracy set Anastasius II in the place of Philippicus; after two years more, in 715, the year in which Walid died, Anastasius fell and Theodosius III was made emperor. Collapse seemed imminent, but at that critical moment the Khalifate passed into feebler hands, and two years later Theodosius anticipated his own deposition



**VISIGOTHIC VOTIVE CROWNS OF GOLD**

After the reign of Reccared (586-601) when Catholicism was made the state religion, the Visigothic kingdom of Spain grew gradually weaker under a succession of priest-dominated kings. These votive crowns of gem-encrusted gold, found at Guarrazar, point to the deference paid by the state to the church.

*Photo, Giraudon*

by a judicious abdication in favour of the man who would otherwise have forcibly ejected him, Leo III the Isaurian.

Walid succeeded at what might fairly be reckoned a fortunate moment. There were no dangerous pretenders to the Khalifate. He had in his service the mighty and merciless Hajjaj, who had crushed by degrees the perpetual sporadic resistance in Irak and Persia to the rule of Abd el-Malik. In Abd el-Malik's latter years the Byzantines had been finally ejected from Africa, and the khalif's lieutenant, Musa, had carried the Saracen dominion to the Pillars of Hercules. The time was ripe for advance.

Walid, or Walid's officers, did advance, and without delay. In Transoxiana Koteiba waged successful war, subjugating or enrolling the Turkish nomads; in 709 he

captured Bokhara after a hard siege; in 712 Samarkand fell to his arms. He was on the way to Kashgar when the campaign was suspended in 715 by the death of Walid and the accession of his son Suleiman (715-717).

During the reign of Abd el-Malik, Kabul had been made tributary. In 711 Hajjaj at Basra found occasion to quarrel with Dahir, the Rajput raja of Sindh and the southern Punjab, thus for the first time bringing India into direct contact with the Mahomedan power. Hajjaj sent his son Kasim to deal with the Indian prince; and though a stubborn resistance was offered by Multan



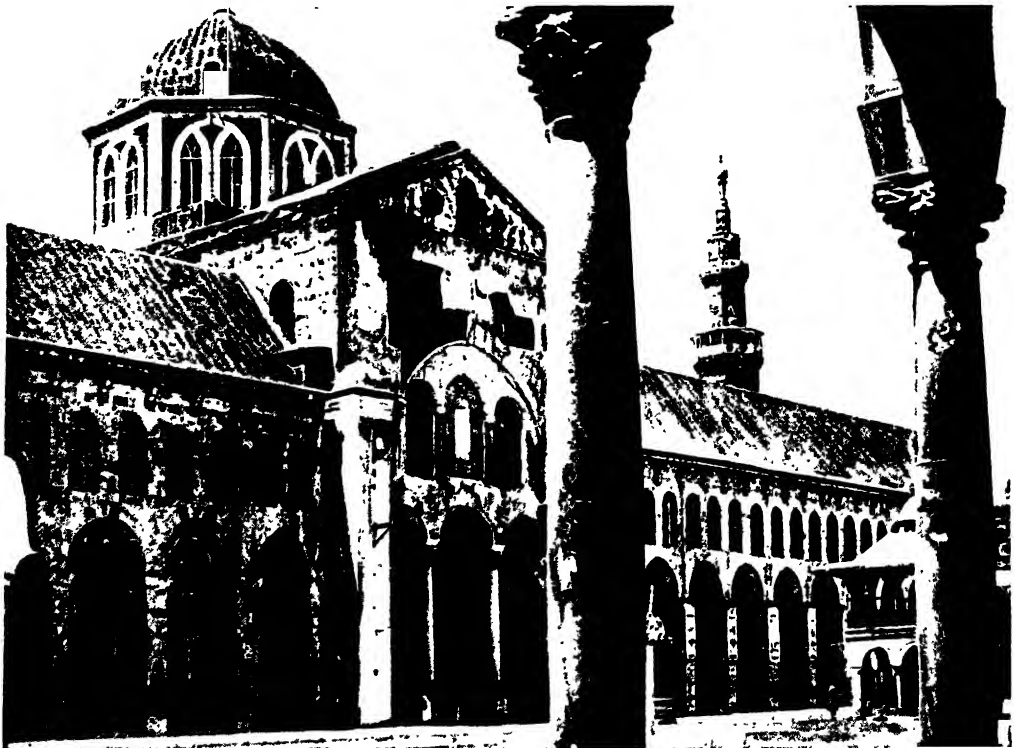
LEO THE ISAURIAN

Leo III (717-741), founder of the Isaurian Dynasty, saved Constantinople from the Saracens in 717, routed them at Nicaea in 727 and finally removed the menace by his victory at Acroinon in 740

*British Museum*

and other towns, Sindh was subjugated, and remained under Arab sway till the fall of the Ommiad dynasty.

The greatest triumph, however, of the Mahomedan arms was in the West. In 711, which Islam might well have reckoned as its 'year of victories,' the bolt fell upon Spain. Musa, now master of the whole north African littoral, dispatched a great force across the Strait of Gibraltar (Jebel Tarik), named after Tarik, the leader of the expedition. The Saracen host landed unopposed; Roderic gathered all the troops that he could muster, and on the banks of the Guadalete fought a seven days' battle with the invaders. His



GREAT MOSQUE AT DAMASCUS BUILT BY THE EARLY OMMIADS

Damascus became the seat of the Khalifate on the establishment of the Ommiad dynasty in 661, but it was not until the reign of Walid (705-715), a great patron of architecture, that the Moslems erected a mosque there. The Great Mosque was then built in its present form. It comprises a vast open court, measuring 430 feet by 125 feet, surrounded by stone arcades, that on the south side opening into the mosque proper, the dome-crowned inner sanctuary.

*From Briggs, 'Muhammadan Architecture'; Oxford University Press*

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army was virtually annihilated. Roderic was never seen again, and a mere remnant escaped to the hills. The Saracens swept irresistibly over the peninsula, subduing the whole of it before two years were passed; only in the fastnesses of the far north-west a stubborn few, who doubtless seemed not to be worth the trouble of subduing, still upheld a precarious freedom.

While Tarik was obliterating the Visigoths in Spain, the Saracen fleet was annexing the island of Sardinia, as another naval base for the lordship of the Mediterranean. This was also the moment when Philippicus was appropriating the imperial crown, which he was quite unfit to wear. It is not surprising, therefore, that in this same year Walid's armies renewed the long-suspended attack on Asia Minor, raided through the Taurus, and wrought havoc in Cappadocia. Before Walid was dead they had mastered Pisidia and Pontus; but it was left to Walid's successor, Suleiman, to concentrate on the second great attack on Constantinople, where the third revolution in the course of four years, the sixth in eighteen, had just crowned the unwilling Theodosius III.

### **Suleiman's disastrous Reign**

**T**HE glories of Walid had been due not to his own genius or vigour, but to his wisdom in choosing ministers whom he trusted, who knew that he trusted them, and who repaid his trust. Suleiman, like Philip II of Spain, trusted no man, dreaded everyone who had shown distinguished capacity, and, whenever he could, killed everyone whom he dreaded. As a natural consequence, his two years' reign was disastrous. From the time of his accession the Ommiad dynasty hastened to its inglorious end.

Hajjaj, happily for himself, was already dead. Musa was promptly disgraced. Koteiba, the conqueror of Transoxiana, sought to prevent the evil day by revolting, but his troops remained loyal, and he was slain; the eastern advance, however, was stayed.

At the moment everything seemed auspicious for the great blow at the Empire. A mighty armament was made ready by sea and land under the command

of the khalif's brother Moslemah for the siege of Constantinople. At Amorium, in the heart of Asia Minor, the Empire had a stout defender in its commander Leo the Isaurian, who held the Saracens at bay; but Leo chose to make a truce with the foreign foe, and to march on the capital proclaiming himself emperor in the place of the latest incompetent occupant of the imperial throne. A struggle for the crown seemed likely to make the fall of Constantinople only the more certain.

### **Constantinople saved by Leo**

**B**UT Constantinople did not fall. Not for the first nor for the last time that city of factions, when it seemed to be past redemption, showed an amazing power of recuperation. A century ago it had risen to the call of Heraclius; now it rose to the call of the Isaurian to whom the relieved Theodosius handed over the diadem to which he preferred for himself the cowl of a monk. The hosts of Arab and Persian warriors poured for the first time across the Hellespont, but the walls of the city were impregnable. Their fleets swarmed up to the Bosphorus, but the fleet which issued from the port of Byzantium spread panic among them by sending down fire-ships, and completed their defeat by the new and terrible artillery of the Greek fire, an explosive of which the composition was a rigorously guarded state secret. Its first use would seem to have been by Constantine the Bearded. The Saracen fleet fell back, and with the Black Sea open to them the Byzantines were in no lack of supplies.

Suleiman died. In the spring the new khalif, Omar II (717-719), sent great reinforcements by land and sea. Again the fleet sailed up the Bosphorus; and this time practically the whole of it was sunk or taken and carried to the harbour of Byzantium, partly by a repetition of the previous tactics, partly because many of the crews deserted to the other side. Leo followed up the naval victory by landing a force on the Asiatic shore which dispersed the Saracen force there, and cut the communications between Asia and the European force under Moslemah, who had the utmost difficulty in keeping his army





## ICONOCLASTS DEFACING A GRAVEN IMAGE

This illustration from a Byzantine eleventh century psalter depicts a company of image breakers defacing an icon. The iconoclastic controversy was brought to a head by the edict of Leo III in 726, forbidding the worship of images and relics, and rent the Church for a hundred years.

*British Museum, Add. MSS. 19352*

from starvation. Then came the news that the Bulgar king was mobilising a great force against the Saracens. Moslemah raised the siege, and cut his way back through Asia Minor to Syria with what was left of the Grand Army. What was left of the Grand Fleet was shattered in a storm off the Lycian coast (718). Leo had decisively saved the Eastern Empire from the Arab menace. Centuries passed before Asia Minor was again invaded in force by Saracen armies.

Omar, a most virtuous and pious prince, was succeeded by Yezid II (720-724). Revolt was again raised in Irak, and in Africa, which was on its way to separation. Yezid was followed by Hisham (724-743), who was mainly occupied in accumulating wealth and maintaining a balance between the Irakian and Syrian factions, while the Abbasids, a second branch of the Hashimites, the kinsmen of Mahomet, were unostentatiously propagating their own claim to be the true representatives of the Prophet, which propaganda was presently to bear fruit.

## The Iconoclastic Controversy

THE reign of Leo III (717-740) opened with the triumphant conflict with the Khalifate, the issue of which was confirmed in 727, when a victory over the Saracens at Nicaea finally drove them beyond the Taurus, though it did not completely terminate their incursions. But his rule is only less important in another field; for he is perhaps more

familiarly recognized as Leo the Iconoclast than as Leo the Isaurian, the name under which we think of him as the saviour of Europe.

As a political factor, the Monothelite controversy pales in comparison with the iconoclastic controversy. Orthodoxy had not long won the decisive victory which finally banned Monothelitism in the Eastern as well as the Western church, when the ecclesiastical world was rent by a fresh contention. The age in which theological subtleties, the correct

formulae for expressing especially the Godhead and Manhood at once of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, most absorbed the acutest intellects of the doctors of the Church, and excited the most violent animosities among those who were not doctors at all, was also the age in which unreasoning credulity was most rife; when unaccustomed natural events were habitually attributed to supernatural agency, when miraculous legends became accepted history, and when the power of working miracles was commonly believed to reside not only in saints departed or still in the flesh, but also in relics and in carven or painted representations of Christ, of His Mother, and of the saints.

Iconoclasm was the revolt against such doctrine and its expression in the worship of such images, a worship almost universally encouraged by the clergy, but denounced by the iconoclasts (that is, image breakers) as idolatry. Judaism, and Mahomedanism basing itself on the Hebrew tradition, condemned the 'graven image' altogether, precisely because its existence was an encouragement to the worship of that which, so long as it was regarded as a symbol and nothing more, was harmless; Mahomedanism took credit to itself for the destruction of idols and pointed the finger of scorn at the Christian idolators.

Leo, then, resolved to do away with this reproach to Christendom, and in 726 he issued a rescript forbidding the worship of images, and ordering the removal or

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painting out of sacred statues and pictures, an example which was to be followed in England nine centuries later, in the days of the Puritan domination. The Cross as a symbol he retained; the Crucifix bearing the image of the Saviour he banned. A mass of intelligent lay opinion was with him; the clergy, headed by Pope Gregory II at Rome, were solidly against him, and with them were the uninstructed masses to whom the images had become fetishes.

In Italy it was impossible to enforce the edict, while Gregory not only defended the principle of image worship, but denounced the sacrilegious emperor in person with surprising freedom of abuse. Elsewhere the execution of the rescript was attended by furious riots. The antagonism between the papal and the imperial authority reached an unprecedented bitterness, so that Leo prepared once more to appeal to the sword in 732; but the elements fought against him and wrecked his fleet before it could reach Italy. So ended, almost before it began, the last attempt of Byzantium to make good its theoretical sovereignty in the West. But in the East the battle between iconoclasts and iconodules was only inaugurated.

### Drastic Interference by Lombardy

**T**HE collision between Gregory and Leo had given the Lombard king Liutprand occasion for aggressive action. The Ravenna exarchate was a wedge between the northern kingdom and the southern duchies. He attacked the exarchate, and before the end of 727 the whole of it was in his hands, with very little fighting. The exarch Eutychius, however, escaped to Venice, now rising to prominence in the security of her lagoons, and in 729 recovered Ravenna by a surprise attack in Liutprand's absence. He then marched on Rome to bring Gregory to reason. Liutprand, who had been engaged (successfully) in similarly bringing the southern dukes to reason, was able to impose a pacification on all the parties, which left the exarch in possession only of Ravenna, and Gregory virtually independent. It was this that caused Leo, two years later, when Gregory III—an equally resolute

opponent—had succeeded Gregory II in the Papacy, to prepare the great but futile expedition of 732.

Meanwhile, Charles the Hammer, firmly established since 720 as mayor of the palace both in Austrasia and Neustria, with Theuderic IV as puppet-king of the whole realm, had been making good the losses that had befallen in the years of anarchy which followed the death of Pepin. Aquitaine, which under its duke Eudo had made itself in effect independent, was left for the time to its own devices; Charles, as an Austrasian, was more immediately interested in the subjugation of the outlying German provinces on the east. In the course of ten years the Saxons beyond the border had felt the weight of his hand and the reach of his arm; the Frisian duke was co-operating in the Christianisation of his subjects; Bavaria was again brought to submission as a vassal state by a series of hard-fought campaigns; and Charles extended his powerful protection to the English missionary Winfrith or Boniface, whose work among the remoter pagans won him the name of 'the Apostle of Germany.'

By this time, however, a far more dangerous foe was menacing the south. But the story of Charles Martel's culminating triumph must be reserved for the close of this chronicle.

### Contemporary Events in England

**E**NGLAND during these hundred years (see maps in page 2410) was developing in isolation, save for her contact with the Scots kingdom on the north. The period of invasions was passed. The independent Britons were confined to their own borders in the south-west, in Wales and in the Cumbrian hills; but neither among them nor among the English was there any tendency to unification other than that of the ascendancy of one or another kingdom or principality over its neighbours. The lead taken by Northumbria, which stretched from Forth to Humber, was lost at Heathfield, recovered on the death in 655 of Penda, the last great heathen, and was again being threatened by the midland kingdom of Mercia as the eighth century advanced;

while the southern kingdom of Wessex was making marked progress. An attempt to conquer the Scots by the Northumbrian Ecgrith was decisively shattered in 685 at Nechtansmere.

Paganism disappeared with Penda. The whole island was Christianised, the Celtic portions holding, like the Irish, to the Celtic church, while Northumbria decided (at the Synod of Whitby in 664),

like the rest of the English, in favour of the Latin or Roman branch. The organization of the Church in England was carried out mainly by the great archbishop (669-690) Theodore of Tarsus; the English monasteries, of which the most famous was perhaps Jarrow, enjoyed a high reputation both for learning and piety, and in the eighth century could claim in the Venerable Bede (673-735) the finest scholar and perhaps the most attractive personality in Europe, and the most famous of missionaries in Winfrith or Boniface (687-755) and his predecessor Willibrord (657-738), the apostle of the Frisians.



**TOMB OF THE VENERABLE BEDE**

Bede, born c. 673, died at Jarrow, May 26, 735, and was buried in the Benedictine monastery church there. In 1022 his bones were removed to Durham Cathedral and, in 1155, placed in a sumptuous shrine. This was destroyed under Henry VIII, and Bede's bones now rest in this tomb in the Galilee chapel.

*Photo, John R. Edis*

**I**NDIA we have seen brought into temporary contact with the main stream of history by the Arab invasion of Sindh in 711. Harsha's Kanauj empire broke up on his death in 647, but no new empire took its place. It is from this period that most of the great Rajput clans date their records; a fact which lends force to the theory that their true origin is to be found in the 'Hun' invaders, who had chosen to merge themselves in the old Kshatriya aristocracy of the Hindus, the royal and warrior caste of Hindu tradition.

China in 632 was under the single sway of Li Shih-min (T'ai Tsung), the second great ruler of the T'ang dynasty. In his reign (627-649) and that of his son Kao Tsung (649-683) Korea was added to the Chinese empire, and its tributary states included Kashmir and Kashgar, the latter of which soon after passed into the possession of Turkish tribes. From the early years of Kao Tsung till the accession of Lung Chi (713-763) the government was controlled by ladies more distinguished for masterful-

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ness than virtue. A temporary relief, and attendant prosperity, came with the early years of Lung Chi, who improved the administration of justice by insisting on a properly qualified magistracy, and encouraged economy by rigidly cutting down the extravagance of the court. But he, too, in the latter part of his long reign, which extended far beyond the limits of the present Chronicle, relapsed under sinister female influences.

Here, then, we turn back to the last decisive episode of our period, in the conflict between the Mahomedan and the Christian powers.

### **Saracen Irruption into Aquitaine**

**WE** have seen that, before the death of Pepin the Younger of Heristhal, the Saracens—the term applied throughout the Middle Ages to Mahomedans, of whatever race, when in contact or conflict with Europeans—were already masters of Spain and the Visigothic province of Septimania in what was later known as Languedoc. There, however, and in Africa they were torn by the same dissensions and disaffections as in the East. Thus their further advance was checked.

Nevertheless, in 720 they broke over the Pyrenees into Aquitaine and laid siege to Toulouse. They were driven out again by Duke Eudo, who, having professed formal allegiance to the king of the Franks, received aid from the neighbouring Frankish governors; but they still kept their hold on Narbonne, in what had been the Visigothic province of Septimania. In 724 they raided over Burgundy. Internal dissensions kept them quiet for some time; Eudo took the opportunity to make alliance with Othman the governor of Septimania and throw off his own allegiance to Theuderich, while Othman revolted against Abd er-Rahman, the governor of Spain. Othman was promptly crushed, and Eudo made haste to return to his allegiance (731), but in 732 Abd er-Rahman swept into Aquitaine with a vast army and drove Eudo in complete rout over the Loire. The fugitive duke betook himself straightway to Charles to implore his aid.

Fourteen years before, Leo had saved eastern Europe. If in that critical year

Moslemah had captured Constantinople, the Saracens would undoubtedly have overrun the Balkan peninsula, and the Eastern Empire, which was still to be the bulwark of Christendom for more than seven centuries, would have gone down. Abd er-Rahman's advance from Spain was probably in fact much less momentous. The conquest of the West would not necessarily have resulted from even the most overwhelming of victories, for there could be no sort of comparison between the Frank power of resistance and recuperation and that of the Visigoths, which crumbled like a pack of cards on the first impact. Nor was there in the West any strategic position which dominated the whole situation as did Constantinople in the East. Moreover, if Islam in the West had not already reached something very near the limit of its capacity for expansion, a single defeat, however overwhelming, would not have driven it, as actually befell, once for all behind the Pyrenees. But a Saracen victory would have brought a Saracen conquest within the range of practical possibilities, and the victory of Charles did at a blow save the West from a prolonged and exhausting struggle with a very uncertain issue.

### **Charles the Hammer's final Blow**

**C**HARLES, a master of swift movement, rapidly drew in a great force from every quarter, with which Abd er-Rahman suddenly found himself faced in the neighbourhood of Poitiers—though Tours has given the battle the name by which it is most commonly known. For six days the armies lay opposite each other, manoeuvring and skirmishing. On the morning of the seventh day Abd er-Rahman attacked. Through the day a furious battle raged; vast numbers, including the Saracen chief himself, were slain. The Franks believed that the battle would be renewed the next day, but when the morning broke the enemy were in full flight for the south and their camp was deserted. Charles at Poitiers had repeated, no less decisively, the work of Leo at Byzantium. In Europe it was only in the Spanish peninsula that Islam had made good its footing. Never again did it penetrate beyond the Pyrenees.



**PILGRIMS PAYING THEIR DEVOTIONS IN THE GREAT MOSQUE THAT MAKES MECCA THE RELIGIOUS CENTRE OF ISLAM**

Mahomet was born at Mecca in about the year 570, and his birthplace remains the most sacred city of Islam. Once a year the Kaaba is draped in a gorgeous black cloth sent with pomp from Cairo; and it is supposed to be a duty incumbent on every Moslem to make the pilgrimage to Mecca once in his lifetime, encircle the Kaaba seven times, and kiss the black stone that is built into it (see page 2373). Pilgrims are here seen gathered before the black-draped Kaaba in the centre of the colonnaded courtyard, which in early mosques was the chief and indeed almost the only feature of the building.

*Photo, Lord Headley*

# MAHOMET AND HIS TEACHING

Life and Character of the Prophet of Islam  
and the Religious System which he instituted

By D. S. MARGOLIOUTH D.Litt.

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THE portrayal of Mahomet's personality and aims is rendered difficult by our ignorance of the environment in which he worked. Mecca, where the first fifty years of his life were spent, is unknown to pre-Islamic history, and, although it became the centre of Islam (an Arabic word, originally meaning 'submission,' used to designate the Mahomedan faith), allusions to it in the Koran are scanty. By the time when the Prophet's biography was committed to writing, a hundred and fifty years after his migration to Medina, it had become the chief sanctuary of an empire which embraced large portions of Asia and Africa, with a slice of Europe. It had become the theatre of a mythological system based on the Old Testament, which appears to have been wholly strange to it. Membership of certain Meccan families had become a patent of nobility wherever Islam established itself; and pedigrees had been thought out for all who had either aided or hindered the Prophet in propagating his doctrines.

Those who either compiled biographies of Mahomet or endeavoured to elucidate the pre-Islamic history of Mecca did so under the influence of presumptions which their religion and the political conditions of their own time suggested. They had no pre-Islamic chronicles placing events in their true perspective; and the oral tradition on which they had mainly to rely was not only, as is always the case with oral tradition, inaccurate, but ended in a chasm caused by the maxim, 'Islam cancels all that was before it.' To the first generation of Mahomedans the immediate past was not worthy of being remembered; it was a period of barbarism which it was best to forget. The glories worth remembering were from the time

of Abraham and Ishmael, who erected its temple; in more recent days the miraculous deliverance of that temple from an Abyssinian attack, certified by a few verses of the Koran.

Whereas, then, in the case of many national heroes it is possible to explain their historic achievement partly by the circumstances of their time and partly by the talents which they displayed, the former source of light fails us almost entirely in Mahomet's case. Great events, it is true, had in the sixth century been taking place in South Arabia, though possibly not greater than previous centuries could show. The ancient state of Saba had succumbed to Abyssinia, and a native rising, supported by the power of Persia, had driven out the Abyssinians. Yet of all this Mahomet's sacred book, the Koran, seems to know nothing, and it may be doubted whether the vicissitudes of Yemen in any way affected the Hejaz. The Koran contains an echo of the internecine war waged by Byzantines and Persians in the 'Near East,' but we have little reason for thinking that Mecca, separated by deserts from Palestine, took much interest in the conflict. Whereas, then, it is customary in the case of revolutions to find ulterior causes and proximate occasions, we are at a loss in dealing with the Mahomedan revolution in Arabia to specify either.

The community wherein Mahomet was born appears to have been a group of tribes living in primitive conditions, and with those conditions the bulk of the people seem to have been reasonably satisfied. So far as we can ascertain, Mahomet did not place himself at the head of a party which already existed, but slowly,

patiently and skilfully created a party himself. That party presently developed into a military force, comparable with Cromwell's Ironsides and Napoleon's Old Guard; and since Mahomet started his career of conquest so soon as he became head of a state, we should guess that in forming his earliest group of adherents he looked out for persons on whose strong arm he could rely. Evidence of such qualifications is likely to have been found in some actual performance on the occasion of some inter-tribal conflict;

**Nature of Mahomet's party** but the maxim which has been quoted renders our chronicles silent about such performances. The careers of the Islamic soldiers begin when they adopt Islam; whatever distinctions they may have won in inter-tribal wars or in resisting the Prophet himself were best consigned to oblivion.

Hence, in endeavouring to explain the rise of Islam we are thrown back on one man, who, if he has not left us a diary, still bequeathed in the Koran a record of his sentiments and experiences, covering a considerable portion of his career. That record is, indeed, devoid of chronological arrangement; much of it may have been imperfectly remembered by those who transmitted it; some of the matter is likely to be later interpolation, some of it conceivably contemporary with the Prophet, yet wrongly assigned to him. In the main, however, its genuineness is assured, and it faithfully reflects the Prophet's mind. The personal element is found throughout; some of it deals in detail with his domestic affairs, not a little with troubles incident to his mission. At times it reproduces his experiences as those undergone by some historical or mythical prophet. In such cases its value as autobiography is greater than its worth as history.

And the difference between the portions which belong to the Meccan period and those which date from Medina is very considerable. In the former he claims to be addressing an illiterate community to whom no previous guidance had been given. To a later generation indeed this claim seemed untenable; it had before it vast quantities of pre-Islamic verse,

exhibiting elaborate finish. Much of it was ballad poetry, recording tribal glories; but much, too, was didactic, recommending virtue, or formulating rules for life. If it approached religion, which was on the whole rare, it preached monotheism, and assumed that there would be a Day of Judgement and a future life. Since the Koran asserts that there was no such literature in existence, it is prudent to regard all this as the projection by a later age of Islamic ideas into the days of barbarism.

The study of pedigrees or antecedents rarely commences with either families or communities before a certain degree of wealth and eminence has been attained; and the materials for such reconstruction are apt to be scanty or non-existent. Not many years elapsed after the Prophet's Migration to Medina before he had acquired the importance which would make his genealogy a matter of widespread interest; but by that time the circumstances of his childhood and youth belonged to a fairly remote period, and little precision was to be obtained about them.

Hence it is doubtful whether we know the name of his father; for Abdallah ('Slave of Allah') is employed in the later literature in the sense of 'person unknown,' and may have the same sense when applied to the Prophet's parent; and the story that he was an orphan, that he lost his parents in infancy, may well rest on a passage in the Koran which need not be taken literally.

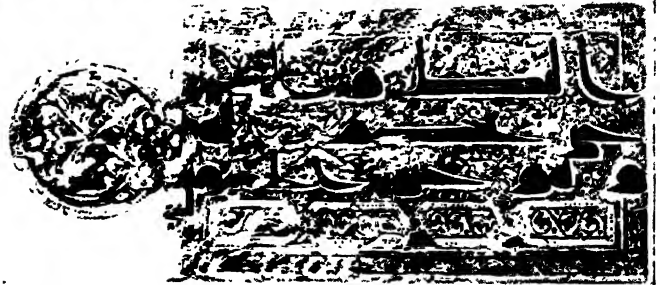
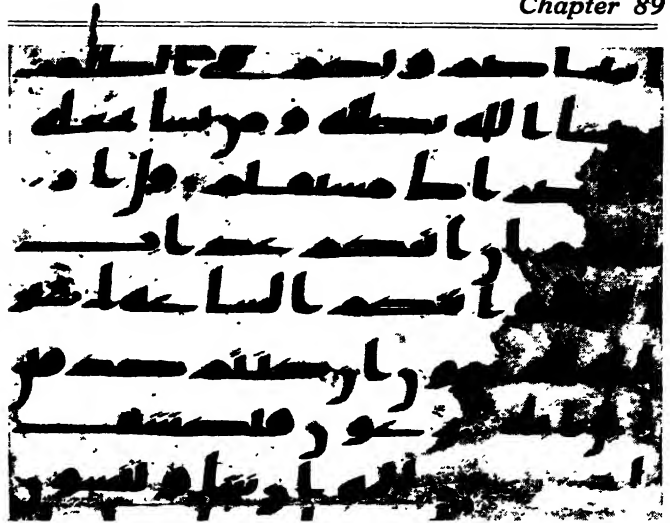
The supposed connexion of his mother with a family of Yathrib (Medina) is suspiciously like those stories which make Alexander the Great a Persian or an Egyptian on the mother's side; men like to think that their rulers are not foreigners but of themselves. The place between the two sacred cities where his mother's tomb was shown, al-Abwa, sounds like a word meaning 'the two parents,' though this is not its correct etymology, and may have helped the myth which makes his mother die on her way to Medina, when visiting the grave of her husband or the home of her family. We may well believe that when he entered history, at the age of forty, both his parents were in their graves.



Several of his relatives are historical figures, and one, his cousin Ali, is prominent. But, just as it is difficult to detect Napoleonic qualities in Louis, Joseph, Jerome or even Lucien Bonaparte, so we find little or nothing in the records of Mahomet's uncles and cousins which bears any resemblance to his characteristics. If he had any precursors—and those named in the Moslem tradition are shadowy figures—they appear to have had no ambition to become reformers, and still less rulers of the community. Moreover, the person whom the Meccans supposed to be Mahomet's Mentor was, according to the Koran, a foreigner; the Biblical material which Mahomet presented was, according to the same authority, which on such a point is likely to be trustworthy, wholly unknown to the Meccan community.

The tradition asserts that Mahomet before his Call was engaged in the carrying trade, but also in retail trade in Mecca. The former is represented as the chief Meccan industry; tradition can even give us a time-table of the caravans and their routes. The Koran itself shows little knowledge of geography, but its descriptions of voyages suggest that its author had travelled by sea. It is acquainted with two seas, one salt and one sweet, separated by a barrier: possibly a reference to the Red Sea and the Nile. It knows that men find their bearings both on sea and land by stars. Guidance and error are its favourite designations of true and false religion; the straight path (i.e. the high road) is its name for the true faith.

Many a metaphor is taken from the language of commerce: God is said to be 'a ready reckoner'; winning and losing, making good and bad bargains, are used of the conduct of believers and unbelievers respectively. And it would seem that the



EXCERPTS FROM THE SACRED CHARTER OF ISLAM

No other book, with the exception of the Bible, has had such profound influence as the Koran, the instrument of Mahomet's revelation. Written on odd fragments, it was collected after the Prophet's death; the earliest copies that we have—these are eighth (top) and ninth century—are in Kufic characters.

*British Museum and F. R. Martin Collection*

author was accustomed to handle large sums. 'A few dirhems' (drachmae) is regarded as a poor price for a slave-boy; at a later period a dinar (a gold coin) is regarded as a trivial loan, a quintar (a hundred pounds' weight) a large one. We are not told in what goods the Prophet's caravans traded; he seems to know more about livestock than any other article of commerce. The Beduins of our day trade in the same.

The Koran, as has been seen, is sparing with geographical names; we may, however, deduce something from it with regard to the nationality of those with whom he associated. Of the Biblical names which it employs some are in their Greek, some in their Syriac form; several of its religious technicalities are of Abyssinian origin; the Old Testament is known by its Hebrew name, and there are certain

other Hebraisms: there is also a certain Persian element. The statements that the Jews were destined to eternal humiliation and the Christians to eternal dissensions imply an acquaintance with the conditions of countries outside Arabia likely to have been acquired in actual visits.

One who could follow the history of the Arabian peninsula in the century which saw Mahomet's birth would have heard much of religious wars. These are attested by contemporary documents, among them lengthy inscriptions. Christian states and Christian communities had been founded in many regions; and some form of monotheism, identified with Judaism, had at least for a time been the dominant system in the south. Mecca, however, was too obscure and isolated to attract missionaries or to be involved in these quarrels. The Koran is emphatic in its assertions that the Meccans had had no previous 'guidance,' had no literary tradition, and were absolutely unac-

quainted with the contents of the Jewish and Christian scriptures. They maintained the religion of their forefathers, which had indeed been substituted by wicked men for the monotheism of Abraham and Ishmael, who had lived in the remote past.

The results of Mahomet's activities were in the first place political, the foundation of an empire; in the second place moral and social, the introduction of a new system of religion and law. Whether the proposition that Islam was propagated by the sword requires modification or not, it is clear that the communities which accepted Islam during the period of its expansion were in the first place reduced to submission by force or threat; the introduction of the system into Egypt, Syria, Persia, North Africa, Spain, etc., did not precede, but followed, the appearance in those countries of Moslem armies. The case of Yathrib (Medina), where Mahomet was first established as despot, is not very



**CITY WHENCE MAHOMET RULED HIS ARABIAN EMPIRE**

Second only in sanctity to Mecca, where Mahomet was born, is Medina, where he died; his tomb is in the splendid mosque visible in this photograph. It was hither that the Prophet fled from Mecca in 622, the year that dates the beginning of the Moslem era, the Hejira or Hijra ('migration'), and thenceforward it was his stronghold and principal residence. Hence its title of al-Madina, the 'city' par excellence, instead of the older name, Yathrib.

*Photo, E.N.A.*

different ; his arrival was preceded by that of a body of his followers, whose interests were indissolubly bound up with his, and before the force which he succeeded in organizing opposition or half-hearted adherence had to yield. Hence, without prejudice to the question whether his real object was religious reform or the seizure of power, we may in the first place turn our attention to the process whereby the latter was secured.

It might indeed seem obvious that one who claimed to be the medium whereby God communicates his will to mankind arrogated to himself dictatorship ; the simple formula which became the Mahomedan creed, 'There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is Allah's ambassador,' implies that to the full. It is surprising that this fact, which Mahomet saw so clearly, was not recognized to anything like the same extent by earlier prophets. They all claimed to be mediums, persons through whom some god made his will known ; and that resistance to the divine behests would result in disaster was generally recognized. Yet

**Moses as the Prophet's model** the prophets who play a prominent part in Hebrew history, and their obscurer colleagues of Hellenic antiquity, rarely aspire to be more than professional advisers. Probably the prophet who furnished Mahomet with his conception of the office was Moses, who in virtue thereof was leader and commander-in-chief of the community, and, in addition, provided it with a code of laws. As compared with the other prophets of whom Mahomet had heard, Moses had the great advantage of having been successful. He had not merely escaped, but had got the better of his enemies and founded a kingdom. \*

The question how Mahomet came in the first place to know something of the Jewish and Christian systems, and in the second to conceive the idea of reproducing the rôle of the founders of those religions, admits of no certain answer, but only of hesitating suggestions. The notion that he had had any human guidance was rejected by Mahomet as emphatically as S. Paul rejects the like. Visions and direct communication with supernatural

beings are the explanation which the Koran furnishes. That these statements refer to some actual experience or experiences is most likely.\* Yet what he had heard and seen on his travels is likely to have furnished him with preparation for the inferences which he drew from these ecstasies. The suggestion may have been made to him by some Christians that he should accept their system and evangelise his own community.

Without laying stress on the matter, the Koran implies that simultaneously with his call Mahomet developed the power to read and write, which he had not previously been able to do. **Script of the Koran** It does not appear that he was ever an adept at those accomplishments ; and it is puzzling that the difficult and imperfect script which was ultimately adopted by all the Islamic languages should have been substituted for the clear, beautiful, and appropriate alphabet of the pre-Islamic inscriptions. So far as the Koran was produced in writing, the former was employed for it. When the Prophet was charged with taking down his matter from dictation he did not allege ignorance of the art of writing, but claimed that it was dictated by Allah.

Sophocles says with justice that it is foolish to aspire to despotism without wealth and friends, since she is only to be won by a host and money. The possession of the latter is the first requisite ; the tradition makes Mahomet acquire it by marriage with a wealthy widow many years his senior, yet not too old to present him with a numerous family. Of this woman, Khadijah, little was recollected by the tradition ; indeed, it contradicts itself by asserting that Islam first enabled women to inherit property. It is more likely that Islam regulated the shares in inheritance than that it first conferred the right of inheriting on women ; and that Khadijah's possessions gave the system an economic basis at the start is quite probable. It also agrees with experience that such a woman should be the first convert, when her husband claimed to be the recipient of divine oracles.

We may also believe the tradition, which has some support from the Koran,

that for a period of years this claim was kept secret, communicated to persons carefully chosen, who were pledged to discretion. It is clear from the Koran that the new doctrine was vehemently hostile to the existing religion, which must certainly have had its hierophants, and whose deities are likely to have been regarded by the bulk of the citizens with reverence and affection. The Koranic code permits the concealment of one's opinions when confession involves any danger, and this principle has become a leading dogma of the Shiah. Concealment is indeed a matter of serious difficulty where people see so much of each other's lives; yet the second condition of securing despotism, a following, could only be realized by this method. It is likely that the rule of the secret society, which became the law of Islam, that life is forfeited by quitting the society, was, if not formulated, at least recognized from the commencement.

There was one serious difficulty about reproducing the rôle of Moses, which Mahomet experienced. Moses was a miracle worker, and other famous prophets had exhibited

**The Koran Mahomet's  
only miracle**

similar credentials. It is noteworthy that Mahomet, though

conscious that he was no thaumaturge, accepts the miracles ascribed to his predecessors without question. If other prophets had been able to give sight to the blind or even raise the dead, why could he do none of these things? Some substitute or analogue had to be found, and this was the miracle of the Koran. This could be explained either as the inimitable perfection of its style, or as the conveyance of information, the truth of which could somehow be ascertained, but to which the prophet could have had no natural access.

We know from the Koran that neither of these claims, when they were publicly made, escaped criticism. The first is clearly too subjective a test; taste in literature varies like other tastes. The second is liable to the obvious objection that either the truth of the statements could not be ascertained at all, or, if it could be ascertained by natural means,

those means were at Mahomet's disposal no less than at other people's. Hence, when he appealed to the testimony of an Israelite for confirmation of his Old Testament history, it was suggested that this person was not only the witness to but the source of the statements. The only workable form of this argument is when the seer can deal with individuals. There are facts in the life of the individual known to no man but himself. If the seer can tell him some of these, it may be justly claimed that the source of the knowledge is supernatural. But where the matter communicated was known to thousands of men outside Mecca, and, if the tradition (not the Koran) is to be believed, to some few inside, the claim to have received it supernaturally, even if true, might reasonably be rejected.

The process of gathering followers was a slow one, and the persons whom it was possible to attract belonged to different classes. **Mahomet's early adherents** prophet's young cousin, Ali, who afterwards became his son-in-law, came very early under his influence; he was of great physical strength. One of the prophet's uncles, Hamzah, also a mighty warrior, was converted. His future father-in-law and first successor, Abu Bekr, was also an early convert; this man, who earned the title of the Faithful Friend, never wavered in his allegiance; the tradition represents him as a capable man of business, but does not credit him with conspicuous intellectual or strategic gifts.

The Koran admits that the bulk of the early followers were drawn from low strata of the community, persons who were not members or at least not full members of the tribes which shared the territory between them. Without inquiring into motives, it is common experience that persons who suffer from some disability or grievance are more readily attracted by a new system than those who are more normally situated.

At the first secret gatherings revelations were doubtless delivered by the Prophet in trance, and their content pondered. Some few of these may survive in the existing Koran, but most of that work



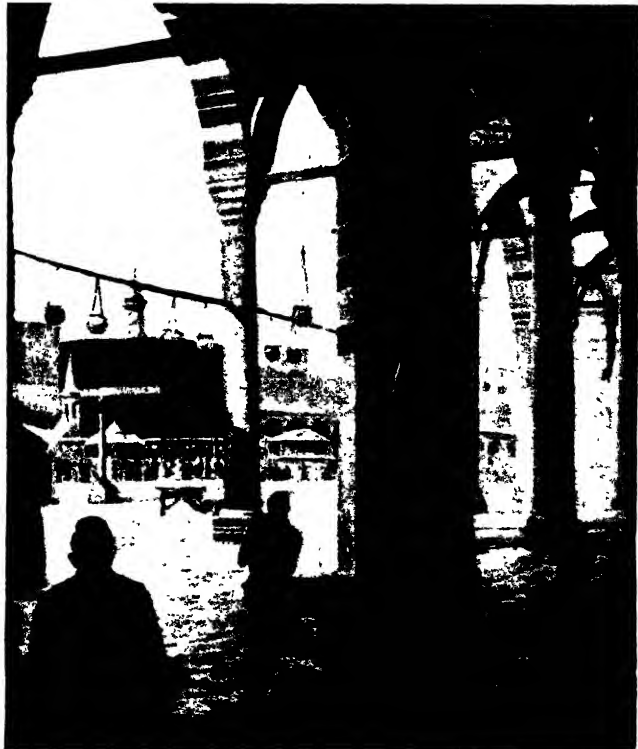
#### STACKED WORKS OF MOSLEM EXEGESIS

With a system like Mahomet's, depending on revelations many of which were admitted in the Prophet's lifetime to be provisional and subject to revision, it was inevitable that an immense exegetical literature should arise. Something of its extent can be realized from this glimpse of the library at Mecca.

belongs to later developments. They are short rhyming sentences, homiletic in character, chiefly dealing with the Unity of God and the Final Judgement. If it be true that Mecca was recognized by tribes spread far and wide as a sanctuary, to be visited in the Month of Pilgrimage, the abolition of the cults which brought the pilgrims thither would clearly be a most serious step, and so sagacious a man as Mahomet would calculate these consequences. Since the readmission of its temple, the Kaaba, as central sanctuary was clearly an afterthought, due to his finding the adoption of a form of Judaism unworkable, it is evident that his attitude towards that building and the ceremonies connected with it was at first unfriendly.

He succeeded in inspiring his adherents with that detestation of and contempt for fetish worship of which the Hebrew writings and the Book of Wisdom furnish examples. Since a reformer who an-

nounces a final judgement must answer the question, 'What shall I do to be saved?' even at this early period some form of ritual must have been introduced, which was modified for various reasons during his lifetime, and stereotyped after his death. The main thing was to convince some trustworthy persons that he was the accredited messenger of the One God. The three years of secret propaganda further prepared him for the kind of opposition which he would have to meet when the secret could no longer be kept. In many communities open denunciation of the city's religion



#### KAABA SEEN FROM THE COLONNADES

The rites connected with the Kaaba and the black stone are clearly of heathen origin, but when Islam was grafted on to them the fable was invented that Abraham and Ishmael had originally built the temple, and that idol worship was later introduced by backsliders. This is a view from the colonnades.

would have meant death for the denouncer. It surprises us that this was not so at Mecca, but a reason can be assigned.

One institution which played a leading part in Mahomet's career, and with which he had at all times to reckon, was the blood feud. The tribe or clan was an organization which avenged the death of one of its members, if slain by a member of another tribe, and, where blood-money was accepted in lieu of retaliation, paid it on behalf of one of its members who had killed someone. When there was an

association of tribes forming a community, an inter-tribal slaughter would hopelessly upset the affairs of the community, since the general sentiment was against accepting blood-money, and honour was rarely satisfied by a single death in lieu of a slain tribesman. The pre-Islamic history of the Beduins was mainly composed of internecine struggles resulting from one murder. It was doubtless in the power of a tribal council to outlaw a discreditable member, but the protection of a respected member of the tribe could render this procedure impracticable. According to the tradition, an uncle of the Prophet, though not himself a believer, Abu Talib, father of Ali, protected Mahomet from violence after the mission had become public and to the end of his life; at his death Mahomet for a time took refuge at Taif, and only returned to Mecca when he had obtained a promise of protection from another chieftain. His humbler adherents were not similarly privileged, and for these Mahomet is said to have found refuge in Abyssinia, where they were harboured on the ground that they were persecuted for having adopted a religion resembling Christianity. It was, indeed, a popular opinion that the Abyssinian king accepted Islam.

The ten years of open preaching at Mecca are most imperfectly chronicled, and contain few incidents comparable in importance with those of the subsequent period. The Koran retains the memory of many a mood: elation caused by some success, depression resulting from some failure, bitterness due to repulses or insults. When his warnings are received with jeers and contempt, he has the

example of earlier prophets, who had endured the like, to console him; he can, moreover, render railing for railing, and heartily curse his opponents, one of whom is immortalised in the Koran. He can promise them a terrible reckoning. But these days were by no means all dark; some of the effusions are in a bright, even a merry vein; evidently his eloquence attracted many and won a good deal of admiration; his claim to inimitability is not very different from that which is found in the works of later poets who had made themselves a name. To us, indeed, the repetitions of the same stories seem unendurable; but it is likely that their effectiveness was what caused them to be repeated; the revelations had the attraction of combining old with new.

About the government of Mecca during this period we know very little; a violent breach with it first occurred when Mahomet invoked foreign aid. If there be any truth in the story that about the time of Mahomet's birth an Abyssinian force endeavoured to capture Mecca, such an alliance would be viewed by the Meccan chieftains with grave misgiving; and some of them may have known that Abyssinian rule had in recent times been established in southern Arabia, though it had been overthrown with foreign aid. From this time the relations between Mahomet and the Meccan sheikhs varied between open hostility and armed neutrality. So far as we can gather, Meccan commerce continued to flourish and the sanctuary to attract visitors during the Pilgrim Month.

The invitation to Yathrib is said to have been a result of the internecine war between the two Arab tribes which resided there with certain Jewish communities. The latter had endeavoured to keep out of the struggle, but, being forced into it, had helped the tribe with which they were allied to score a victory. Victories are won by deities, and, since at Mecca there was a man who claimed to be an emissary of the Jewish Deity to whom this victory had doubtless been attributed, some members of the defeated tribe were anxious to procure this ally. The victors, however, were naturally eager to do the same, and a

scheme which had been intended to bring about a continuance of the struggle led to its cessation. In accepting the invitation to Yathrib the Prophet acted with the utmost caution. A solemn pledge was exacted of the deputation who invited him that he would enjoy no less protection in Yathrib than he was enjoying in Mecca ; an agent was sent thither many months before he himself started, to keep him in touch with the affairs of Yathrib, and to inform him of the reception enjoyed by his Meccan adherents who proceeded to migrate to this city of refuge, and who, when he arrived, would serve as a bodyguard on whose loyalty he could rely. Only on the eve of his departure did his fellow citizens realize the danger which this enterprise meant to themselves. They resolved on his assassination, but while this was being elaborately planned he escaped, accompanied by Abu Bekr. After employing some expedients to mislead their pursuers, they ultimately reached their destination.

Whereas camel breeding was the staple industry of Mecca, cultivation of the palm was that of Yathrib, which we may now call Medina, since in the Koran it is known as al-Madina, 'The City'—the city, that is to say, of the Prophet of God. The Prophet appears to have made a serious mistake in endeavouring to deal with the

latter and had to find some other means of supporting his followers. Raiding of the Meccan caravans was the expedient to which he resorted, and an enterprise of this sort in the second year of his residence at Medina resulted in his first important victory at Badr, where he defeated a Meccan force, though the caravan which he had hoped to capture escaped. After this he was able to deal successfully with internal and external enemies, having at his disposal a better disciplined force than was to be found in Arabia, with partisans on whose unquestioning obedience he could rely, being always ready to take good advice on military matters, and having an extraordinary talent of gauging men's abilities. A desperate attempt was made in the fifth year by the Meccan leader, with the aid of a coalition of tribes, to take Medina and put an end to Mahomet and his mission. Having overcome this danger, partly by the skill of his defence and partly by diplomatic subtlety, his subjugation of the Arabian peninsula proceeded with speed ; men of military talent or genius who had been among his opponents came over to his side. He is even said to have issued an identical note to all known sovereigns, bidding them accept

**Mahomet's Life  
at Medina**



**WARLIKE STEP IN MAHOMET'S POLITICAL ADVANCEMENT**

The earliest Moslems were too occupied with conquest to concern themselves with art. When settled conditions returned it was the conquered who supplied the deficiency, and the Abbasid period was renowned for Perso-Moslem portraiture, nothing of which survives. Our earliest representations of Mahomet date from the Mongolian period ; this miniature showing him at the siege of Banu Nadir is from a manuscript, dated 1310, of the Jami' el-Tawarikh of Rashid ed-Din.

- From F. R. Martin, *The Miniature Painting of Persia, India and Turkey*





#### MAHOMET INSTRUCTED BY GABRIEL

The revelations that constitute the Koran were made to Mahomet in different manners, and not all had the same degree of immutability. One method, it was believed, was for the archangel Gabriel to act as intermediary; and this is represented in a painting from another Jami' el-Tawarikh manuscript.

*From F. R. Martin, The Miniature Painting of Persia, India and Turkey*

Islam if they meant to be safe. It was left to his successors to prove that this was no idle threat.

The whole period from his call to his death appears to have been twenty-three years, of which the first three were secret preparation, the next ten missionary activity, the remainder spent in the multifarious duties of monarch and military commander at Medina. We may well believe that his death seemed at first incredible to his devotees; a passage in the Koran, wherein it is anticipated, is said to have been interpolated on this occasion. That work furnished no obvious guidance on the question of a successor, and his adherents are to this day divided on this subject. In default of a son and heir the succession went (not without disputes) to fathers-in-law, then to husbands of his daughters, then to a brother-in-law, who founded a dynasty.

This is a brief sketch of the Prophet's political career, the success of which is explained by his ability, energy and persistence; whereas his opponents were deficient in some or all of these qualities. The ease wherewith the pagans abandoned their ancient cults is indeed surprising; persecution, which in so many countries has rendered the victims only the more tenacious of their beliefs, served

to make the Arabian pagans abandon theirs. We proceed to outline the system which Mahomet substituted for those which were current in Arabia before his time.

These latter were certainly polytheistic, and, it would seem, involved various orders of supernatural beings, male as well as female. From inscriptions we learn that there were at least attempts made to construct a family out of them, though it is unlikely that this process was systematised as it was by the Greeks. It is also possible that special functions were assigned them, yet the evidence of this is slight. Probably each tribe had its god or patron; and where tribes

were collected into a community there was conflation of cults.

Tradition asserts that stones which, whether carved or not, represented deities existed in great numbers round the cubic building which was then, as now, the Meccan temple. The names which meet us in the Koran and the tradition as those of Meccan idols meet us to some extent in other parts of Arabia.

The Koran has various assertions which are puzzling, because they imply a sort

**Meccan religion  
before Islam**

of combination of paganism with Judæo-Christian ideas. According to that work the angels were supposed to be female and daughters of Allah; and, since the birth of a daughter was regarded as a misfortune and disgrace, the Meccans are taunted with making Allah less fortunate than themselves. These beings were, it is said, supposed to be their intercessors with Allah.

It is unsafe to accept the account of a religion given by a bitter opponent, and it is possible that the opinions refuted in the Koran were in part some that had been improvised in the course of controversy. If the Meccans knew about angels, and had worked them into their system, they cannot have been altogether ignorant of Judæo-Christian beliefs; and

if other beings had subordinate rank to Allah the difference between Mahomet's monotheism and the Meccan system would not have appeared in the first article of the former's creed. Yet that article, 'There is no God but Allah (the god or God)' was doubtless intended to be an innovation, conflicting with Meccan beliefs. In promulgating this proposition Mahomet believed himself to be the true successor of the Biblical prophets, beginning with Adam and ending with Jesus Christ. Allah was the sole creator of heaven and earth. His existence with some of His attributes could be inferred from the phenomena of nature.

The second and last proposition of the creed, 'Mahomet is the ambassador of Allah,' is connected with a theory of prophecy which, without being identical, is not unconnected with Judaeo-Christian views. An 'ambassador' means one sent, an apostle; a prophet (in Arabic) means one who has information. In some cases the message was confined to a particular order, or warning against some particular offence. In others, notably those of Moses, David and Jesus, the message took the form of a Book, whose contents would be likely to contain rules of conduct, but need not be confined to such material.

The divine communication was somehow put into the Prophet's mind, though the mode appears to have been envisaged differently at different times. At one period the idea seems to have been that the Prophet had access to a book written in a divine language, which he was empowered to translate into Arabic. At other times an angel, Gabriel, acted as intermediary. It seems clear that the Prophet regularly received the communications in trance, and that these were committed to memory or copied down by persons privileged to hear them. Late in his career there would appear to have been a whole staff of persons who acted as scribes on these occasions.

A generation or two after the Prophet's death we find the Koran cherished and guarded against loss or corruption. Presently the alphabet is drastically reformed in order to prevent ambiguity. Studies of various sorts accumulate round it. But in the Prophet's own time it seems to have been regarded somewhat as we regard a newspaper or the utterances of a preacher. The performances may be highly appreciated, but they are none the less ephemeral; men take, as a rule, no trouble to preserve them, because they expect to



#### MAHOMET CONSECRATES THE BLACK STONE FOR MOSLEM WORSHIP

The same manuscript as that mentioned opposite shows Mahomet replacing the black stone after the rebuilding of the Kaaba. This stone, probably of meteoric origin, was an object of worship to the pre-Islamic Meccans and was built into one corner of a rectangular 'ka'bah' or chamber; Mahomet, though bent on abolishing idol-worship, was reluctant to ruin his birthplace by destroying its sanctity and so, after rejecting Jerusalem, rededicated to Islam the sanctuary of the black stone.

*From F. R. Martin, The Miniature Painting of Persia, India and Turkey*

have unlimited opportunities of reading the same newspaper. In the Meccan period the revelations took mainly the form of reproduction of certain Biblical stories; at Medina they took the form of comments on current events or improvised legislation.

Events succeed each other so quickly that the interest in them is evanescent; we can imagine when the Mahomedans were defeated at Uhud the whole of

Medina was anxious to hear the revelation which was to account for it.

But when other trials of strength came and resulted in victory the comments on the defeat at Uhud would have only antiquarian interest; the revelations about the latest excitement would be eagerly awaited. So, too, with the utterances which deal with court scandals. When these were forgotten, as in the course of days they naturally would be, the revelations to which they gave occasion would interest a very few.

At a fairly early period the theory was formulated that the revelations were not necessarily of permanent value; Allah had no difficulty in causing a text to be forgotten or erased, and one equally good or even better substituted for it. An even more serious admission was made, that it was the practice of Satan to interpolate oracles into the divine collection, which, indeed, were afterwards expunged by Allah. No prophet could quite avoid this disaster. It is generally admitted that some of the abrogated matter remains in the Koran, and the attempt to distinguish it from the non-abrogated has given rise to a vast literature. These confessions, that the oracles of Allah were liable to alteration, and might even be temporarily interpolated by the enemy of mankind, could not fail to emphasise that ephemeral character which the revelations from their nature had.

One man cannot sufficiently enter into the mentality of another to be sure of the correct account to be given of these 'revelations.' There are reasons for thinking that towards the end of the Prophet's life the revelation was little more than the recognized form of a royal rescript; we hear of remonstrances urged

against unfair legislation, and, seeming reasonable, leading to the introduction of modifying riders. We hear of suggestions made by followers of the Prophet which were presently embodied in revelations. Since it was at this time in the Prophet's power to enforce obedience, the distinction between his words and Allah's was of no practical importance.

It is, however, probable that this was a late development. It seems clear that in the case of some fairly late revelations connected with domestic scandals the outward signs of mediumship were manifested, and mediumship implies unconsciousness on the part of the medium, whose voice or hand is under the control of another personality. These utterances, though produced in the name of Allah, are so very human in character that only those who had been long accustomed to hearing revelations produced, and to accepting them as genuine, could be convinced of their authenticity. It is not possible to define the extent to which the Prophet himself could distinguish between his own sayings and the communications of Allah.

Religion in most of its known forms has two elements: mythology and ritual. The term mythology need not imply that the matter of which it consists is unhistorical; **Mythology of what it does imply is a Islamic system** record of occurrences which are not in accordance with ordinary experience. It provides evidence of the interference of a deity or deities in human affairs such as normal experience does not provide, and hence furnishes information about the deity or deities which is not otherwise accessible. Mahomet accepted the Judæo-Christian mythology for his system, only claimed to have received it not from books or men, but from Allah. This was the way wherein he conceived the Torah had been given to Moses, and Isa (Jesus) had been taught the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel. His revelation was thus not dependent on previous revelations, but was an independent confirmation of them, whereas they, on the principle which has been stated, confirmed the genuineness of his book.

The question how far the Koran is actually in accordance with the former books will be answered variously according to our standards of accuracy. Its reproductions of Genesis and Exodus are often reasonably accurate; of the remaining books of the Old Testament its knowledge is very vague; the matter which corresponds with the Gospel is far nearer certain Apocryphal works than the canonical Gospels. Jewish traditions are mixed up with the matter which corresponds with the Torah. The main result is, however, the identification of Allah with the God of whom the Jewish and Christian books claim to be revelations. And the theory of supersession or abrogation serves to bring the whole into a sort of harmony. The revelation given to Moses was superseded by that given to Isa, the Christian Messiah; the latter, similarly, by that given to Mahomet. Indeed, the Messiah had foretold the arrival of a later messenger to be called Ahmad, which was a variety of Mahomet's name. The prophecy is usually identified with the promise of the Paraclete in the Fourth Gospel, though some ingenuity is required to make this plausible.

But besides historical matter the sacred books also contain rules of conduct, or

laws; and the Islamic systems treat as parts of one system ritual, civil and criminal law. Early Islamic jurists arrived at the conclusion that the 'pillars' of Islam were five in number:

the creed of two propositions, Five Pillars the daily ceremony called of Islam prayer, the fast which is maintained throughout one of the twelve lunar months, the pilgrimage to be undertaken once at least in a lifetime, and the yearly tax for the benefit of the poorer members of the community, called Alms.

These pillars were laid at different periods of the Prophet's activity, and were not completed till some time after his death. Even the short creed can scarcely belong to the commencement of the mission; it seems clear that at that time the name al-Rahman (Aramaic for 'the Merciful') was preferred as the designation of the Deity. Further, the stereotyping of the postures assumed and the formulae uttered, as well as the number of times in the day (five) for and the time-limits of prayer, were slowly evolved. The value of this ceremony, wherein lines of worshippers adopt simultaneously the same postures behind a leader as at military drill, is unlikely to have been recognized before such drill



**FAST AND PRAYER : TWO OF THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM**

It can only have been towards the end of Mahomet's career that the prescribed formulae of prayer were evolved; and probably not until after his death that the ritual of the daily prayer drill was stereotyped and made one of the five 'pillars' of Islam. These Algerian Mahomedans are in the third posture—complete prostration—of the prayer drill, in which the worshippers carry out the various motions simultaneously; the occasion is the Fast of Ramadan, another of the 'pillars'.

became a necessity. The form of words which therein corresponds to the Christian Paternoster contains polemical allusions to Jews and Christians which indicate a period near the close of the Prophet's career. It would appear, however, that some form of prayer (for which an Aramaic word is employed, perhaps not unknown in southern Arabia) was introduced at the commencement of the mission.

The Jewish and Christian Day of Rest did not commend itself to this man of affairs; yet the advantage of a regular

**Retention of  
Pagan ceremonies**

weekly meeting of Believers was apparent, and when relations with the Jews of Medina had become strained the Friday was adopted for this purpose, and the Meccan Temple made the direction of prayer in lieu of Jerusalem. This change laid the way for the conciliation of Mecca, which was further hastened by the institution of the Pilgrimage to that place, involving the retention of a number of ceremonies whose origin was pagan, though a new interpretation could be given them, based on the Biblical theory that the northern Arabs were, through Ishmael, descendants of Abraham. It is certain that the former of these names was got by Mahomet neither from Arabs nor from Jews, but from either Syrian or Greek Christians.

The fasting month, wherein food of all sorts is forbidden from sunrise to sunset, appears to belong to military discipline. It means the turning of night into day and vice versa. \* The demand of a regular contribution from income for the maintenance of the poor of the community corresponds with the introduction of a system of taxation into an organized state. While Islam was going through its earliest stages the struggle for existence compelled the wealthier members to devote some portion of their substance to the support of the destitute.

So far as these institutions were developed during the Prophet's lifetime, the political key appears to be that which gives us access to the reasons for their character. Besides mythology and ritual a religion should also have doctrine and morality. Next to the unity of Allah the doctrine whereon the Koran most insists

is the Future Life and the Day of Judgement. In the opening chapter of the Koran (which serves in lieu of the Paternoster) Allah is described as King of the Day of Judgement, the phrase adopted being Hebrew or Aramaic. The tradition adds many details about that Day to what is stated in the Koran; but the Koran is clear that a record of men's acts is being kept, and that according to the preponderance of good or evil the dead, raised to life, will be introduced into Paradise or cast into a flaming Hell. The Paradise will offer a variety of sensual delights—the Koran promises:

All who believe in Allah and His Prophet shall be admitted hereafter into delightful gardens. They shall repose for ever on couches decked with gold and precious stones, being supplied with abundance of luscious wine, fruits of the choicest variety, and the flesh of birds. They shall be accompanied by damsels of unsurpassed beauty, with large, black, pearl-like eyes.

The narratives which were told repeatedly at Mecca illustrated the results which might be expected by a people who refused to listen to a prophet sent them; they took out of which only the Prophet and his adherents were rescued. It is likely that the Prophet's first warnings to the Meccans were that something similar was to be expected if they rejected his claim to be their divine guide, only this threat failed to materialise. It became merged in rather than replaced by the threat of a final judgement.

When the first victims fell in battle between the Believers and Unbelievers the prospect of a future Day of Judgement which would assign them reward and punishment respectively became too distant; the Prophet could assure his followers that the martyrs were not dead, but alive, and could tauntingly ask the fallen Unbelievers whether they were now convinced that his mission was genuine. Consistency in such a matter is not to be attained; the Day of Judgement is no less awaited for these apparent exceptions to its universality.

The theory that Mahomet was a moral reformer is not easily demonstrated,

because we know little of pagan life in his part of Arabia which is not learned from the Koran. Prohibition of alcoholic liquors was introduced as a measure of military discipline; it has become a prominent feature of the system, and those who regard this as a moral reform have a right to claim it for the Prophet. The extent to which female infanticide was practised is too obscure to enable us to state with confidence that its prohibition made a great difference in the life of the community. The theory that the birth of a daughter was a misfortune was not altered; since, however, the families which meet us at the commencement of Islam show no lack of women, it would seem that this drastic method of dealing with the calamity was exceptional.

In sexual morality it does not appear that any noticeable change was introduced. The Prophet, as his fortunes rose, increased his harem like other Oriental potentates, chiefly, so far as we can judge, though not in all cases, with some political purpose.

The Koran claims certain privileges in this matter for him on the ground of his prophetic office, yet it is not clear that the text which gives a general rule meant to limit a Moslem to a particular number of wives, and the number of concubines permitted is certainly unlimited. For those who suppose the number of the former to be limited the extreme facility of divorce renders the limit nugatory. The institution of slavery was left unaltered except for certain regulations facilitating manumission, and the treatment of the latter as a pious act, which could serve as expiation of certain offences.

If there was one virtue which was associated with early Islam, that was courage. To some extent this may have been infused by the declarations that death in battle furnished a passport to Paradise, and that squadrons of angels were fighting on his side. Yet the men whom he attracted and whom he endeavoured to win were largely persons who enjoyed fighting; and the introduction of angels had the great advantage that it furnished the enemy when defeated with an excuse which saved his face.

The degree of religious toleration which he ultimately admitted was an outcome of his military and political system. Bloodshed on a large scale was (the Koran asserts) proper for a prophet at the commencement of his career, and only financial necessity led him at first to accept ransoms for prisoners. But when a large body of men is habitually maintained by plunder they are unfitted to earn their living by agriculture and trade; and if the adoption of a creed automatically transforms the plundered into shareholders with the plunderers the chances of continuing this form of livelihood steadily dwindle. Hence the idea arose of permitting certain communities to retain their religion on condition of their disarming and paying tribute to the Mahomedan army. Although then the Jews are unsparingly attacked in the Koran, and the Christian doctrine declared to be a blasphemy sufficient to cause a cataclysm, the needs of the state rendered it advisable to grant these communities the means of maintaining themselves. There are reasons for thinking that this sort of toleration might have been extended by the Prophet to some of the idolaters had he been able to overcome the scruples of his chief adherents.

The chief blot on the system and one that has been more fatal to it than any other is the legitimization of perjury. It is at the discretion of one who has sworn an oath to violate it on condition of his performing some act of charity if his means permit, or fasting for a certain period if he be destitute. It may be that the historical and other personages who have taken advantage of this licence would have perjured themselves in any case; yet it would have been better that they should have had the disapproval rather than the approval of their religion.

Mahomet's career is unique in known history, and comparisons with those of other reformers or empire-builders are halting. Other men starting with no more capital have collected armies and raised themselves to thrones; and others without military operations have founded religious systems which have persisted. Mahomet accomplished both; and, though

his procedure as a conqueror has much in common with those of other political adventurers, what is remarkable in him as a prophet is that he was no fanatic. He shook the faith of his adherents at one time by compromising with idolatry, at another by dropping his title of prophet when the other party to a treaty refused to allow it him. He offered no encouragement to those followers who wanted to be ascetics. His readiness to produce revelations which abrogated earlier texts must have constituted a sore trial to many who had accepted the latter as the word of God. His desire to conciliate rather than to avenge himself upon his old Meccan enemies gave offence to the Medinese, who, having been to him what, according to the Koran, the Apostles had been to Jesus, had reason for fearing that he meant to make Mecca the royal residence when it had accepted Islam.

The combination of the two functions, that of religious reformer and that of political adventurer, has complicated the task of judging his career, since different standards are ordinarily applied to the two, and the religious opinions of the judge affect his estimate of doctrinal reforms. The saintliness which is a requisite in a prophet is not demanded of a conqueror; on the other hand, it is difficult to feel admiration for a religious teacher unless his teaching be believed to be sound.

The biography of Mahomet, though composed by his followers, makes it clear that, whereas the activities of his opponents were hampered by conscientious scruples, chiefly connected with the sanctity of the tribal or the family bond, he never allowed any scruple to stand between him and success. His mentality is indicated by his ruling that profession of Islam was what mattered, the sincerity of such profession being no concern of his. The rule that life was forfeited by apostasy was sufficient to render conversions permanent. The maxim that Islam cancelled all that was before it, faithfully observed by him even when he had serious injuries to avenge, rendered inquiry into a convert's antecedents superfluous. Another maxim; not perhaps actually formu-

lated by him, appears conspicuously in his conduct of affairs, viz., that every man has his price.

His private life, for the period wherein it is recorded, presented more than one domestic scandal, which in themselves shock the reader less than his claim of divine authorisation for his procedure in these matters. Since his Deity recommends wife-beating, polygamy and unlimited concubinage, and he appears to have delivered the maxim 'marriage is annulled by captivity,' his theory and practice in domestic matters evoke little commendation.

His doctrine is summed up in the two propositions of his Creed, that there is only one God, and (or but) Mahomet is that God's ambassador; the will of that one God is therefore to be known only through Mahomet, whence professing monotheists who are not also Mahomedans are designated enemies of Allah. In his lifetime the danger which resulted from the ascription of ill-considered legislation to the Deity was modified by the theory that Allah could abrogate his revelations, and that some of the Prophet's utterances were not *ex cathedra*. Conceivably, then, the assertion that the year authorised by Allah is of twelve lunations, which has rendered the Islamic calendar intolerable in states which obtained their main revenue from agriculture, might have been abrogated if the Prophet had mastered the fact that the year is not an arbitrary number of lunations, but a cycle of seasons, and that intercalation is not an act of wanton wickedness, but a necessary expedient.

But the Koranic assertion that their religion was completed compelled his successors to abide by the rulings of the Koran where such existed, and where they failed to seek guidance in such of his words and deeds as happened to be handed down. Possibly the stagnation or retrogression of Islamic countries is ultimately referable to geographical and climatic conditions; but the theory that one man is the sole and final channel whereby the divine will is communicated to mankind is at least secondarily responsible for it.



# A STUDY OF JAPANESE ORIGINS

The diverse Racial and Cultural Factors that went to the building of Japanese Civilization

By L. H. DUDLEY BUXTON

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IN studying the archaeology of most parts of the East we are dependent on the labours of a few Europeans, who are necessarily handicapped in their work by being strangers in a strange land and being far from home. In Japan we are more fortunate ; not only have many Europeans worked there, but also there has grown up in Japan itself a flourishing school of archaeologists and ethnologists who have done much to elucidate the early history of their own country.

The study of Japanese origins can be approached from two points of view. We can either rely on the excavations of archaeologists or we can study the modern peoples : or we can combine both methods of approach. Let us begin with the modern peoples.

If you stand on a cold winter's day on the quay-side of Aomori at the very end of the central island of Japan, waiting for the steamer to carry you across to the northern island, Hokkaido, you will see two entirely different types of peoples in the crowd. Most of those waiting will be Japanese. There is no mistaking them. They wear kimonos and probably wooden pattens on their feet, and seem to be dressed for the warmer skies of southern Japan, not for the icy blast that comes from the sea. They are mostly very short, with round faces. The women have straight, black hair, and, though some of the men have moustaches, none have more than a few straggling hairs on the chin. Everybody's eyes are brown, and the eye-slits are almond-shaped. Here we are away from the industrial centres of modern Japan and few will be wearing European clothes. We may even see a man with his straight black hair tied up

in a knot on the top of his head, as was the custom in old Japan.

Although most of the crowd are Japanese, dainty, polite, pleasant-spoken, very helpful to the stranger, yet you will if you are lucky see sitting down cross-legged in a corner some very different people. They may be clothed in skins, or in a dark tunic with bold patterns on it. Both in their garments and in their faces they are quite different from the Japanese, and they speak a totally different language.

The women look at first sight as if they had moustaches, but a closer examination will show that they have really tattooed the upper lip and part of the cheek in a fair imitation of a fierce cavalry moustache. They have also tattoo marks round the wrist and on the back of the hand. Their faces are much more oval-shaped than those of the Japanese, and their hair often

**Characteristics of the Ainu**

has a distinct wave, quite unlike the straight locks of the Japanese. Their eyes, though usually brown, may occasionally be hazel, and, unlike the Japanese, they are most often large and open like our own, not almond-shaped. They usually have rather high cheek-bones and coarse, thick noses. But the men present the greatest contrast. They are heavily built fellows of medium height, and, especially if they are old, they have enormous beards hanging down almost as far as their waists. They have a great bony bar across their foreheads, the so-called 'bar of Michelangelo,' which with their heavy eyebrows often gives them a scowling appearance. Unlike the Japanese they seem dressed to stand the cold, and are obviously used to it. Perhaps they are even walking along the half-frozen landing-stage with bare feet.

There is a strange difference between these Ainu and the Japanese. The Ainu are clearly a primitive people, accepting the marvels of civilization, the cranes at the docks, the ferry steamer, as something quite beyond their estimation, but keenly interested in something they can understand, such as a small clinker-built dinghy, much better than their own rude boats, or even a modern pocket-knife, with all sorts of instruments attached to it. The Japanese, on the other hand, heirs of an old civilization, discuss the amenities and discomforts of travel, and tell one, for instance, that there is a gramophone on board which has some good records of Japanese music. We are still in Japan itself, and close to the docks are the typical examples of Japanese culture. There are rice-fields, flooded and being ploughed with a water buffalo. The houses are lightly built of bamboo and paper, with tiled roofs; everywhere, as throughout all Japan, there are signs of a civilization which, in spite of the introduction of modern industrialism, depends mainly

on the products of semi-tropical eastern Asia, rice and bamboo.

On the northern island cultural surroundings are very different. In the towns Japanese life and thought are dominant. But the Japanese are colonists who have brought their civilization with them into a strange land. Although there are traces of the Ainu everywhere they are a dying people, and to find their true culture one must visit their villages. The houses are built solidly of logs and are thatched with straw. In the centre of the house there is a great hearth with a fire burning, and smoke finds its way out through the roof. Each house consists of a single room; there are none of the paper compartments of a Japanese house.

The strangest thing of all, however, is that they have no pottery of any sort. Most houses to-day have some tin pots and pans bought from Japanese pedlars, but these are not Ainu. When an Ainu housewife wants to boil some water she does it in a kettle made of bark. There is never a crock, a cup, a saucer or a jug in the



#### SURVIVORS IN THE NORTH OF THE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF ALL JAPAN

The tattoo marks on the arm and round the lips of the woman (left), her thick hair and the profuse beard of the man, their more Western-looking eyes and noses and the prominent eyebrow ridges, and the thick, dark clothing so unlike the Japanese kimono, all sharply distinguish these Ainu of Hokkaido from the inhabitants of the other Japanese islands. Archaeological investigation suggests that these were the original stratum of population on which the Japanese were imposed from without.

*From Batchelor, The Ainu and their Folklore; and photo, Nippon Yusen Kaisha*

house, unless it has been bought from the Japanese. This is very striking and of great ethnological importance, as we shall see later.

The Japanese administration is compelling the Ainu to change some of their habits, but they prefer to live mainly on the spoils of the chase and on fish, for they are very skilful fishermen. The women practise a little agriculture, almost of the Stone Age type, cutting off the ears of grain with knives made of shell. We are dealing, in fact, with a very primitive people whose culture in many ways recalls the culture which some of our ancestors living on the shores of the Baltic must have practised long ages ago.

At first sight the great contrast between the Ainu and the Japanese may seem to suggest that they have nothing in common, but archaeological evidence here

**Evidence from ancient burials** steps in to show us their relationships. First the evidence afforded by the remains of the people themselves is, perhaps, the crucial factor. The contrast that I have drawn between the outward appearance of the Japanese and the Ainu is reflected in the skeletal remains, both in ancient and modern times. Even if you dress up an Ainu in Japanese clothing he looks entirely different from a Japanese. Similarly it is hardly possible to mistake a Japanese skull for that of an Ainu. First of all, the Ainu skull is very massive and tends to be either long or of medium length, whereas the Japanese is much more slender and tends to be more rounded. Apart from mere technical details, however, the most striking difference is due to the bony mass above the eyes, to which I have already referred. The Japanese skulls have smooth foreheads, whereas the Ainu skulls have a well-developed massing of bone above the eyes, large 'brow ridges,' as they are called by anthropologists (see page 209).



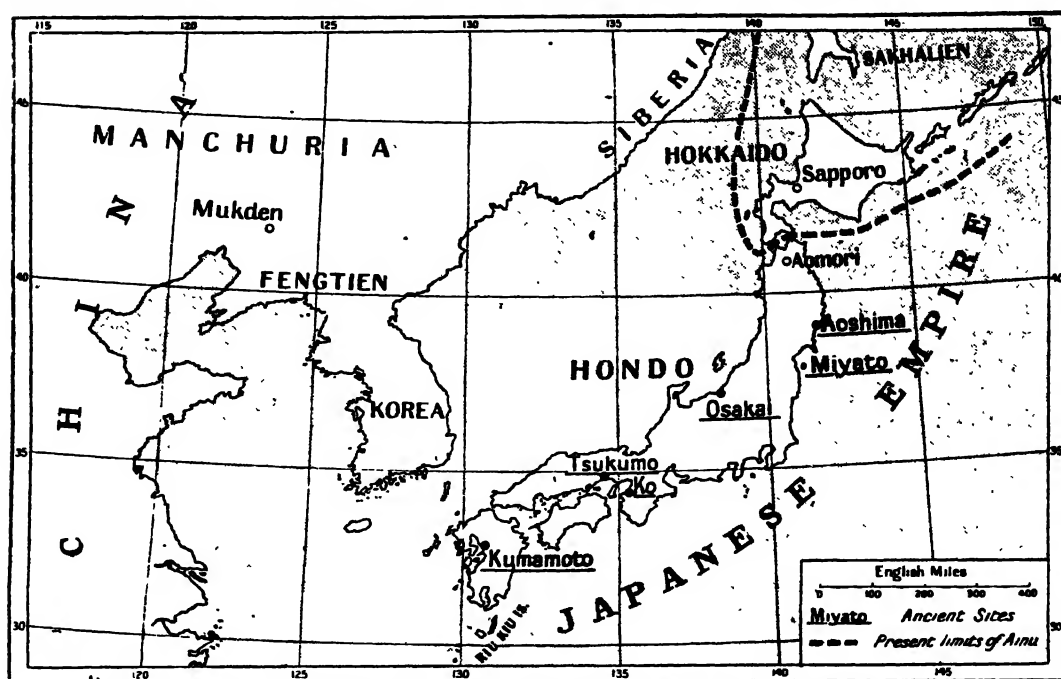
INTERIOR OF AN AINU HOUSE

In contrast with the flimsy constructions of the warmer south, Ainu houses are stoutly built of wood. An oblong space in the centre, of great sanctity, is reserved for the hearth; the cauldron seen suspended over it in this drawing is not of Ainu manufacture, for the Ainu make no pottery themselves

*From Hitchcock, The Ainu of Yezo*

Now, it would hardly be surprising if we found such skulls in the northern island of Hokkaido; but, as a matter of fact, in all the most ancient graves which have been found even as far south as Kyoto the type of skull is not Japanese but Ainu. In the museum at Kyoto there is a particularly good series of these ancient skulls, and the contrast between them and the modern Japanese is most striking, whereas it is hardly possible to tell them apart from those of the modern Ainu. The archaeological objects found in these graves I shall discuss later. If we examine the skeletons, however, there are certain differences between those found in the ancient graves and those of the modern Ainu, although in other characters the resemblance is close.

If we examine the individual leg-bones, it will be found that in the ancient skeletons the bones of the thigh and shin are curiously flattened. This flattening does not occur among the modern Ainu. It is, however, not necessarily a racial character. Such flattening often occurs in the ancient skeletons dug up in England, that do not differ otherwise from those of their descendants to-day. The flattening seems due rather to certain bodily habits than to race. It certainly does not invalidate



#### ISLAND WORLD IN WHICH THE DISTINCTIVE JAPANESE CULTURE AROSE

As this map shows, the Ainu in Japan to-day are confined to the northern island of Hokkaido or Yezo, though prehistoric burials in the southern islands yield types almost indistinguishable from the modern Ainu. Who exactly the people were who supplanted them is still quite uncertain, but the geographical facts make it extremely likely that they came from Korea or through Korea from Manchuria; though their nearest physical affinities to-day are to be found in southern China and the Malay peninsula.

the suggestion supported by most of the other characters that the skeletons from the most ancient graves of Japan belonged to people who in physical form strongly resembled the modern Ainu. They were not quite identical, and possibly, as we shall see later, belonged to a different branch of the same people.

The cultural evidence conflicts in some respects with the evidence provided by the actual remains of the people. The modern Ainu have little material culture which would survive the disintegrating forces of nature. Their bark utensils are very frail; their houses are of wood; many of their other implements, except where borrowed from the Japanese, are also wooden. Ornaments such as bear's teeth and implements made from shell would, of course, survive. The remains, on the other hand, of the material culture of the Stone Age in Japan are extremely different from anything associated with the Ainu. Rather rude pottery has been found in abundance. It is often marked with a

pattern, probably intended originally as an ornament to replace the cord with which the earliest potters in human history bound their clumsy, hand-made pots before firing them. This type of pottery is world-wide, and is usually known to archaeologists as 'cord ware.' Ornaments made of clay and shell have also been found and some of deer's horn. A few stone implements, including stone axes and arrow-heads, have also been excavated.

All this is entirely alien to Ainu culture, and makes it quite impossible to suggest that these people, who in most cases had a physique like the modern Ainu, had a similar culture. We have here, as elsewhere, a serious conflict between the evidence provided by the students of man's physique and that provided by those who have confined themselves to a study of culture alone.

The evidence of non-material culture as far as it goes seems rather to support the evidence provided by physique. I cannot speak on linguistic problems, for

I have no knowledge of the Ainu language, but Dr. Batchelor, who is the principal expert on that subject, believes that place names which owe their origin to peoples of Ainu and not Japanese speech are widely spread throughout Japan ; and he suggests that at one time the whole of the Japanese islands were occupied by Ainu-speaking peoples. This would quite agree with the physical evidence, which is supported not only by the discovery of ancient skeletons, but also by the fact that there are to-day in the Riu Kiu (Luchow) islands south of Japan a people who in physique almost exactly resemble the modern Ainu. When we find Ainu to-day in the north, people with exactly

the same physique in the south, and a similar physique in ancient graves in the middle region, it is unlikely that there was not an almost uniform type of man living at one time in the whole area. It seems further probable that over both the central and northern islands of Japan a tongue the same as or similar to the modern Ainu was at one time spoken. But there are at present no traces of a material culture like that of the modern Ainu elsewhere than in the island of Hokkaido, although a similar culture does occur on the island of Saghalien, and even traces of such a culture on the mainland of Siberia.

It may be suggested that the Ainu are the degenerate descendants of more advanced ancestors. This, however, seems improbable ; people who once used pottery are not likely ever to have forgotten it. Indeed, even to-day in out-of-the-way parts of Japan a very primitive type of pottery is still made for ceremonial purposes. It recalls the early Stone Age pottery and seems to have survived in the cause of religion when its place in everyday life was superseded by a more advanced wheel-made type. If the making of such pottery survives to-day in southern Japan, even when it is no longer used for everyday life, it seems very unlikely that its use should have been altogether forgotten in the northern island, where it is badly needed. We may probably conclude, therefore, that pottery never was known in northern Japan.

If this conclusion is correct, then we are faced with two problems in studying Japanese origins. We must try to discover where the physical types came from, and also what is the origin of the early Japanese culture. There is good reason to suppose that the Ainu belong to a type of man who was formerly widely spread over the whole of northern Asia. Some ethnologists would see in them remote kinsmen of the northern Europeans, and have called them proto-Nordics ; whether such a name is justifiable or not does not matter for the moment. In any case a comparison of such ancient skulls as we have from northern Asia makes it almost certain that the Ainu and a few scattered peoples are the sole relics to-day of a once widely-spread people. They are so widely spread and are associated with such different material cultures that the difference of cultures in Japan is no objection to our believing that at one time they occupied the whole of "modern Japan."

Whether they have left any of their blood in the southern islands is altogether another question. Curly hair does occur occasionally, especially in the northern part of the southern island. It is almost certainly due to Ainu influence, but may be of quite recent origin. One of the features which characterise Japanese history and which has impressed itself on the social organization of Japan is the continual struggle with the Ainu, who were not entirely driven out of the southern island until comparatively late in historical times. In the southern part of the empire they have been entirely absorbed and little if any trace of them can be found to-day. All that remains of the Ainu in this region is the prehistoric grave mounds, which are found in various places. We do not know when these early people first saw their land invaded by aliens of another race, nor exactly who the first invaders were.

But modern Japanese people appear to belong to two or three different types. The older ethnologists distinguished a coarse and a fine type, and though some modern Japanese ethnologists have suggested other terms, usually from a site where ancient remains have been

discovered, the distinction into coarse and fine is nevertheless a good one which may be confirmed by observation. The invaders seem to have belonged certainly to two types that are found on the mainland of Asia to-day, and that correspond in a certain degree, although not entirely, to the modern Japanese in physical form.

It was originally suggested that the origin of the Japanese people was to be found in the Malay region. It is true that such types are to be found there, but they are almost certainly immigrants to that area, to which they came from southern China. Indeed,

**Origin of the** to-day some of the  
**Modern Japanese** people of southern China and Indo-China are very closely allied physically to the Japanese. It must not be supposed, however, that the ancestors of the Japanese necessarily came from southern China. There has been a succession of invasions into China from the west at various times. These invasions have pushed some of the more northerly people southwards and quite possibly pushed others in an easterly direction into Japan. In any case, however it came about that they migrated into Japan or that their kinsfolk migrated southwards, the fact remains that they certainly are akin to one another. But this would only account for part of the modern Japanese people.

Korea and Manchuria lie very close to Japan, and, although there are certain differences, there is also a close resemblance between the inhabitants of the two regions. It is probable that the 'fine' type in Japan is akin to the Manchu-Korean type. Most modern Japanese ethnologists are inclined to lay the greatest stress on this element in the population. There are plenty of reasons for supposing that Korea has had a profound effect on Japanese culture, but it seems more likely that the physical type from this region is not entirely the dominant form. Manchuria and Korea are situated in a region where there has been much movement and mixing of human types. It is probable that the Manchu-Korean type is by no means a pure one, but is rather a mixture of the kind of man who is to-day found in

southern China with a more northerly type, and perhaps with some of the invaders who originally drove the first ancestors of the Japanese into Japan. However, this mixed type came into Japan at some unknown time, probably in the period known to Japanese archaeologists as the middle Neolithic Age, whose date at present is undetermined. The introduction of metal into Japan seems to have been accompanied by another invasion also from Korea.

The result of this series of invasions has been that the Japanese to-day are physically a very mixed type. Every possible variation of head-shape known to the human race occurs, and, though this in itself may not be of great importance, what must be stressed is that each individual community shows within itself a great variety of individual features—a sure sign of mixed origin.

There is, however, one fundamental difference between the modern Japanese and their Stone Age predecessors. The former belong to the same racial group as ourselves, usually known to anthropologists as the Cymotrichi, or wavy-haired peoples, but the modern Japanese, in common with the Chinese and the majority of the inhabitants of eastern Asia, belong to a totally different type of man, the straight-haired group or Leiotrichi. This group of mankind is sometimes known as the Mongolian race.

At present, owing to the fact that no archaeological material has been found which can definitely be compared with other countries, we do not know the date when this change took place. At present most of our comparative chronology is based on Egypt and Mesopotamia, and until it is possible to link up the Near and Middle East with the Far East it will not be possible to give any date with any exactitude. If I were pressed to give a date, I should say perhaps some time before 3000 B.C.; but that is a mere conjecture, and the actual date may be as much as 1500 years later. It is almost certain that the process of immigration was a gradual one. The straight-haired invaders did not suddenly overrun the country and utterly destroy the previous

inhabitants. They gradually spread, and drove out the aborigines before them, probably to a certain extent intermarrying with them. But this spreading took a very long time. Even in the historic period the Japanese were still engaged in establishing their footing in the northern part of their main island. In Hokkaido it may be said that the gradual extension of the Japanese race as against the Ainu is still continuing to-day. It seems probable that unless special measures are taken, which seems likely, at no very distant date the process will be completed, and none but Japanese will occupy all the islands of Japan.

If we leave the question of the origin of the Japanese physical type and turn to the history of Japanese material culture, we are at present faced with greater difficulties and with problems which still await the spade of the archaeologist. The earliest culture which has so

far been found on the mainland in China is associated with an extremely fine painted pottery, some of which shows a relationship with similar painted wares from the Near East. This pottery has a wide distribution in China, and extends even as far as the central province of Manchuria, Fengtien, whose capital is the well-known town of Mukden. Farther to the east it has not so far been discovered. It may, of course, exist, but Japanese archaeologists have been working in Korea, and, though they have been most fortunate in their discoveries, the painted pottery does not yet seem to have appeared.

We seem to come into an entirely different archaeological zone; it would be described by archaeologists as Neolithic, though I do not mean to suggest that it is necessarily comparable in date or character with the Neolithic in Europe, for it has a character all its own, and its date is at present quite uncertain, probably not very



#### FINE PAINTED POTTERY OF THE PREHISTORIC CHINESE

An interesting complication has been introduced into the archaeology of the Far East by the discovery in China of a widespread class of painted pottery whose affinities lie westward, with the ware illustrated in page 457. Culture therefore seems to have been moving eastward in the Far East during the Neolithic Age; yet this painted ware is not represented either in Korea or Japan, which suggests that the first invaders after the Ainu did not come from central or southern China. D, dark grey; remainder red. Designs, black and red, thrown up by a white slip in the case of B.

*After Palaeontologica Sinica*



early relatively. This Neolithic culture existed in Manchuria, Korea and Japan, three regions which appear to have formed a definite culture province and whose relations with the rest of Asia are not as yet fully understood. The culture gradually moved eastwards; possibly this was its natural trend, possibly the people associated with it were being gradually pushed to the east by invaders from the west. The people, whoever they were, who brought the painted-ware culture into China and Manchuria may have been partly responsible. But here we must move with caution; it is always unwise to associate a definite physical type with a particular type of culture.

We know definitely that at least some of the users of the painted ware were almost identical with the modern Chinese, although it is equally

**Culture movements in Neolithic Age** certain that their culture came from the west. It looks, therefore, as if what was happening was a gradual extension eastwards of a series of cultures, probably largely by means of trade. The people at the extreme edge of Asia always were a little behind-hand and apparently only received the pottery and fashions that had passed out of use farther to the west. But unfortunately at present, beyond the fact that Japan was being influenced by a culture from the mainland, we do not know exactly whence the mainlanders learnt the culture which they were passing on; it was almost certainly from the west, but at present the intervening links have not been filled up. It may be said almost with certainty that the pottery did not spread across the Gobi Desert. That region has been steppe land for a long time, and steppe dwellers are nomads who even to-day are not users of pottery. You cannot conveniently carry pottery on the backs of camels; it gets broken.

It must be suggested, then, that the ware of early Manchuria and of Neolithic Japan somehow came thither across China, but that at present its history is not fully known. First of all, as frequently happens, this pottery, or material culture perhaps it would be better to say, spread without any marked traces of invaders.

A few men may have brought it. But in any case in Japan itself the people who learned to use the pottery and other objects which are found with it were the aboriginal people of the land. For some reason or other the culture only spread a certain distance. It almost certainly came from Korea, and, as far as we know, spread over the southern islands of Japan. But it never reached the northerly island of Hokkaido.

This is a very important point. It explains some of the difficulties which we have met with earlier in this study. We were faced with the problem that whereas the Neolithic people of Japan proper resembled the Ainu in physical form, they possessed a material culture which was even in those days far more advanced than that of the modern Ainu. There is now clearly no reason to suggest that the Ainu have forgotten to make pots and pans and have in a degenerate mood fallen back on the use of birch bark, like the lazy people in Kingsley's *Water Babies*. The knowledge of pottery reached Japan proper in the Neolithic Age and was adopted by the people there, but it never reached their cousins across the strait, just as later, although Chinese culture and Buddhism permeated all Japan proper, the Ainu still remained primitive animists and continued the bear worship they still practise (see page 189).

But there are even in the early graves traces of certain differences between the people of Japan proper and the Ainu. This is probably due to a slight infiltration of people from the mainland bringing with them the knowledge of pottery, for, after all, though trade may do much, it takes a certain number of people to teach the aborigines how to use the articles of trade. Though a change of culture is not necessarily to be associated with a wholesale invasion of a new type, it cannot go entirely unattended by its users.

One of the remarkable features of later Japanese culture is the way in which the Japanese, no doubt owing to their somewhat isolated position, borrowed the elements of other cultures and converted them to their uses. The same is more or

less true of their earlier history, and to a large extent we can trace an evolution in Japan itself, although there are, of course, outside influences occasionally at work. The Neolithic Age in Japan can be divided into three periods: early, middle and late. The early period represents the beginning of things as far as our archaeological evidence goes at present. This is probably due to the fact that the earlier cultures were not unlike that of the modern Ainu to-day, of whose utensils, as I have already pointed out, remarkably little would survive owing to their perishable nature, and of whom we should know very little indeed if we could not study them in the flesh. The early period is characterised by a rather coarse, thick pottery with designs in low relief. This ornamentation is usually obtained by pressing bits of clay on to the pot after it had been shaped. The designs are sometimes in spirals and

curves; sometimes there is a simple cord pattern like so much Neolithic pottery. A remarkable feature, however, of the early Neolithic Age of Japan is the very elaborate form of the handles of the pots. A few ornaments have been found, usually made of teeth or bone.

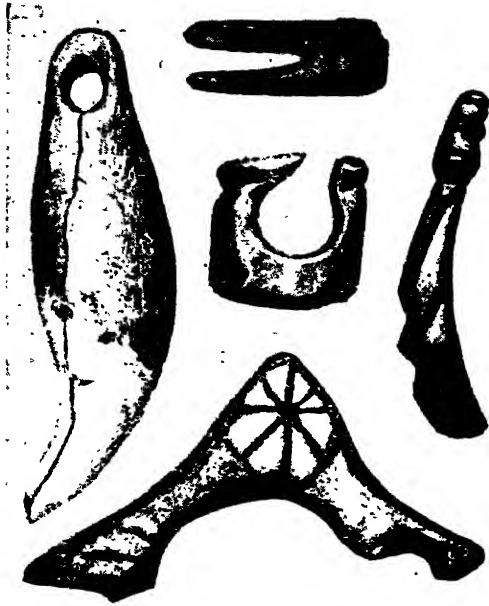
This culture is clearly an imported one. It bears much in common with other known Neolithic cultures of Eurasia but presents certain local features. It may, I think, be reasonably suggested that it represents a type of pottery which has ultimately descended from the Neolithic wares of the west. The elaboration of the handles suggests that the pottery has a long history behind it, even though the ware is sometimes coarse. It seems probable that frequently in this pottery the local workers, who had a tradition behind them inherited from outside, were not always quite as skilful as their teachers.



#### PROGRESS IN POTTERY AMONG THE EARLIEST DWELLERS IN JAPAN

The occupants of the prehistoric graves in the south differ from the modern Ainu in the possession of pottery. The culture can be divided into three periods: in the first (a and b) the pottery is coarse, with curving ornament dabbled on in relief and sometimes with a design made by pressing a mat on to the clay; in the second (c) the fabric is much better, and the curved ornament is incised; in the third the ornament is geometrical—the examples shown here (d and e) are either of the third or the very end of the second. The last (f) represents the beginning of the Iron Age.

*After Matsumoto, restorations by L. H. Dudley Buxton*



#### EARLIEST JAPANESE ORNAMENTS

These personal ornaments of the Neolithic race of Japan were found in the shell mounds of Tsukumo and Todoroki. They consist of an ear-ring (centre) and amulets, pierced for suspension, of stone, antler, boar's tusk, shell, etc.

*From 'Kyoto Archaeology'*

Some of the pots have a pattern which seems to have been made by pressing a mat or cloth on to the pot, a type of pottery which occurs elsewhere.

In the middle Neolithic Age the type of pottery changes. First of all the pots are crude and thick, but later specimens are found in which the potters have become masters of their craft and are able to make thin ware. The type of ornamentation is entirely different. Instead of patterns being made in low relief they are incised either with some sort of blunt implement or with the thumb-nail. The types of patterns are either curves or spirals as in the earlier pottery. Mat designs occur and the handles gradually grow smaller until they disappear altogether. In this period some curious human figures have been found. The features are indicated partly by dabbing on bits of clay and partly by making incisions with a stick or other implement.

In the late Neolithic the mat patterns disappear or are merely imitated by incised patterns. The curves and spiral

patterns also disappear, and their place is taken by geometrical designs.

This period is followed by the beginning of the use of metal. At this time there appear to have been in use two types of pottery, one of which is closely akin to some of the contemporary pottery from Korea, while other specimens show a resemblance to the pottery at the end of the Neolithic period.

All this enumeration of different types of pottery is rather dry and technical, but the facts are necessary if we are to understand the problems concerned with Japanese origins. The points that emerge from a study of these different types can be simply enumerated. First there is a gradual improvement in the pottery. At first it is coarse and thick, and, though it possesses even at the beginning certain evidence of a long history, still it seems as if the actual makers had themselves but little experience in the art. The later periods show a progressive skill in the art of making pots.

Secondly, the decoration shows a continuous evolution. This can be traced in several ways. First, and probably most important, the type of decoration changes from a free spiral to a geometric form. Secondly, the handles gradually degenerate from the great elaboration of the earlier periods to a complete absence or a small secondary form at the end of the period. Thirdly, in the earlier periods there is a well-developed mat marking, which in later times either disappears or is simply imitated by incised markings.

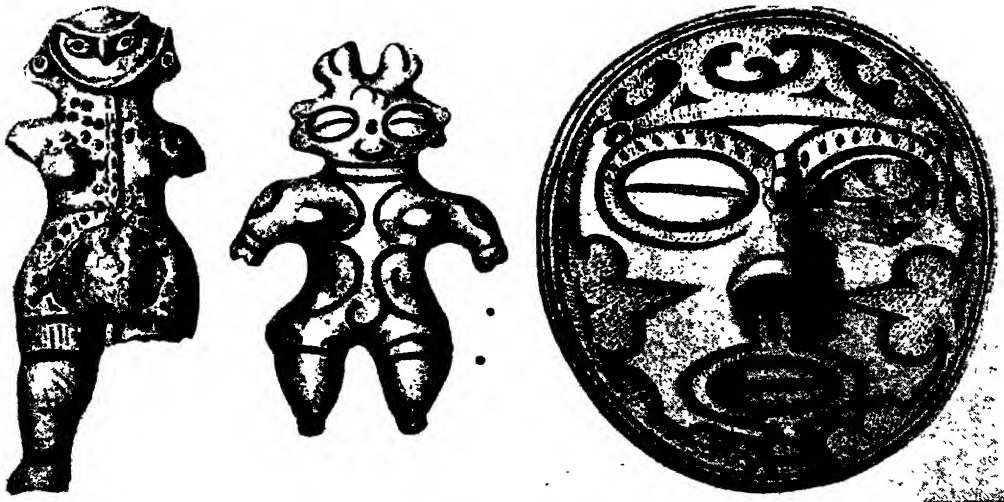
These changes in pottery are very similar to those which are known to have occurred elsewhere. It is a natural line of evolution in ornament for spirals to become geometrical, for real patterns to be stylised and imitated, just as the cord design to which I have referred is the last relic of a real cord which in long ages past was used to bind up the pot made by an unskilful potter who could not mould his clay properly. The tendency of all designs which are used again and again is to develop along a line which combines practical advantage with economy of effort. Now, all through the Neolithic

Age in Japan, great as are the differences between the beginning and the end, the tendency seems to be generally along evolutionary lines. The pottery has developed in an orderly sequence, following the same lines that it has followed elsewhere, but still doing it without any great revolutionary change. We do not get any violent change suggesting a complete alteration of culture until the very end of the Stone Age. It is no doubt probable that there were outside influences, and these may have helped to hurry the change which was taking place naturally; but it would seem that on the whole, once the unknown traders or invaders, probably few in number, had started the Neolithic culture of Japan, it went on developing by its own momentum, although it is possible that the neighbouring coast of Korea may have been not without a certain influence.

At the end of the Neolithic period a change took place. So far we have not found any evidence of an invasion before the end of the Neolithic period, but it is not impossible that it began during this time. The introduction of metal was revolutionary. The invaders were sufficiently numerous or sufficiently warlike to

conquer the land, and either exterminate or drive into the more inaccessible regions all the old Neolithic peoples. They changed the physical type of Japan, gradually spreading until they had occupied the whole island. They brought a different culture with them, a culture which shows affinities, as might be expected, with that of Korea, whence they almost certainly came. But so tenacious of life were the old forms of culture that, side by side with the new, they still persisted. In this way Japan inherited much of the culture of the Neolithic period, even though eventually the physical type has to a large extent disappeared. We find a close parallel to this in China, where many of the features of the culture associated with the painted ware have survived until to-day.

From the beginning of the historic period onwards for centuries Japan was occupied in putting her new house in order, and in subduing the aborigines. The struggle was a severe one, and Japan and Japanese life can hardly be understood without a consideration of these origins. The invaders had a very hard struggle to establish themselves. This



QUAINT FIGURES OF THEMSELVES MADE BY THE PREHISTORIC AINU

It is hardly imaginable that the modern AINU can have forgotten the art of pottery making; more probably an intrusive culture from the mainland, carried over by trade or driven eastwards by the painted-pottery makers, established itself in the south but never reached the north. These figurines, that distinguish the middle Neolithic period, argue quite a high technical skill; they show a transition in that their features are partly incised, partly bits of clay dabbed on in the earlier manner.

*From Maeda, 'Japanische Steinzeit'*

necessitated a military and feudal organization which developed and survived in Japan almost down to modern times. This feudal system is the direct result of a dominant race being compelled to fight desperately to maintain its position. The colonisation of Hokkaido has been continuing since the tenth century, and is even now not quite complete. In Formosa the struggle of the Japanese with the aborigines is strongly reminiscent of her earlier struggles in her own land.

At this point we can leave the evidence of archaeology and turn to the more definite, though sometimes inaccurate, information of the chronicles. Of these

there are two which  
**Earliest recorded** record early Japanese  
**Japanese History** history. One is The Records of Ancient Matters compiled apparently from native sources in A.D. 712, and the other The Chronicle of Japan (A.D. 720). The latter, although it gives a definite chronology, is largely made up from Chinese sources. Much contained in these histories is legendary, but they contain undoubtedly a stratum of fact, although they can hardly be said to be historical until A.D. 500. The dates appear to be 120 years too early, and in some cases give an impossible length to an emperor's reign, probably because the compilers, writing long after the events, found a gap in the records and credited the known emperors with reigning throughout the time of the gap.

Making allowances for these facts, the general outline at least of Japanese history can be fairly satisfactorily filled in. During the early legendary period, stated to be from 660 B.C. to A.D. 500, the names of twenty-four sovereigns are given, of whom seventeen reigned for impossible periods. This period undoubtedly begins with the invasions of Mongolian folk from Korea, a fact which is actually stated in one of the versions of the Chronicles. The emperor Jimmu, whom the Japanese revere as the first human emperor, and the fifth in direct descent from the Sun Goddess, is said to have had a campaign of seven years, at the end of which he was crowned (in 660 B.C.) in Yamato. Following him are eight emperors of whom no details are given. The tenth emperor, in

whose reign there was great pestilence, died in 30 B.C. Probably making allowance for the 120 years mentioned above, the actual date is about the beginning of the second century A.D.

For the next two hundred years the most important events in Japanese history are the continuous series of fights with the Ainu, and the gradual setting of the kingdom in order. The Chinese histories record that in the last half of the second century A.D. there was a period of civil war and disorder, which was eventually ended by a female sovereign. It is of interest to note that women play an important part in the early history of Japan. This empress of the Chinese Annals probably coincides with the empress Jingō, who in the Japanese history is said to have made a successful invasion of Korea. This story itself seems improbable, because not only is it full of miraculous events and inconsistencies, but also it is not mentioned in the Chinese Annals. The Chinese kept up a close connexion with Korea, and had this invasion been of the magnitude that Japanese history would have us believe they could hardly have passed it over. While admitting the reality of the central figure, her exploits then seem somewhat uncertain. There was undoubtedly, however, much intercourse between Japan and Korea in the third and fourth centuries, so the story is not entirely apocryphal.

Shipbuilding seems to have made considerable progress, and in A.D. 405 (in Japanese history 285, that is 120 years too early) writing  
**Writing learnt**  
 was introduced from Korea. **from Korea**  
 We may date written history

from A.D. 473. The introduction of writing was of fundamental importance. The story is told that two books were sent over from Korea, the Confucian Analects and the One Thousand Character Essay, still the school books of China. These books were accompanied by learned teachers, and there is plenty of evidence to suggest that there were large numbers of Koreans and even Chinese settled in Japan. Not only did they teach writing but also some elements of Chinese civilization, including the cultivation of silkworms.

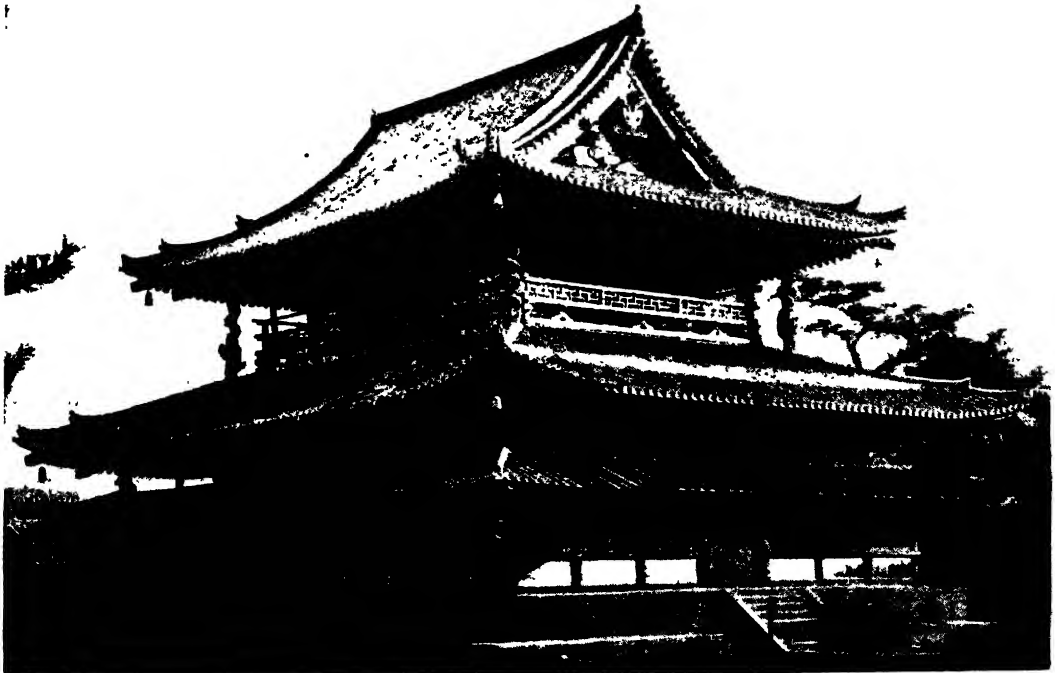
The true introduction of Chinese civilization, however, did not come until A.D. 552, when Buddhism was introduced from Korea into Japan. Its introduction coincides with a plague and at first it received a set back. Its eventual establishment in the country was due to the fact that in a disputed succession to the throne the successful contestants were supporters of Buddhism, and with the success of the latter Buddhism took a definite hold over Japan.

In 588 relics and Buddhist priests came over from Korea and Chinese civilization was firmly established. It is interesting to note that the introduction of Buddhism into Japan almost coincides with the introduction of Christianity into England.

Contemporaneously with the spread of Buddhism considerable reforms in the organization of the kingdom took place. The emperor Kotoku is credited with the organization of a ministry on the lines of the T'ang dynasty in China and with numerous legislative reforms. He was

associated in this work with his heir Katsuragi, afterwards the emperor Tenji-Tenno. The year A.D. 672 is usually considered as an interregnum and may be said to date the beginning of the 'Fujiwara Period,' called after the great family of nobles who for many centuries were destined to dominate the throne.

Other important events were also taking place which had a profound effect on the history of Japan. In the earlier reigns it had been customary for the capital to change with each emperor. In 709 the first permanent capital was built at Nara, where the court resided for 75 years, during which time there were four emperors and four sovereign empresses. The reign of Shomu Tenno (724-748) has left the famous Buddha and many pagodas at Nara. Japan had definitely emerged from her early stage of development and contributed to the art treasures of the world. Finally the fiftieth emperor Kwammu moved the capital from Nara to Yamashiro and built the famous city of Kyoto.



NEAR NARA : THE OLDEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE IN JAPAN

Time was when the capital of Japan changed with every emperor; the first permanent capital was Nara, the residence of eight successive rulers after A.D. 709. What attracted the court may well have been the sanctity of the place, for Buddhism, introduced in 552, was by then the state religion, and near by at Horyuji is a splendid Buddhist temple, the oldest in Japan, having been founded by the regent Shotoku Taishi (572-621). This is the Kondo or main hall.

Photo, E.N.A.



**THE KAILASA : A JEWEL OF HINDU TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE HEWN BODILY FROM THE LIVING ROCK**

Apart from successful raiding campaigns the great Gupta dynasty and its successors of northern India never brought the south under control ; it was ruled by several contemporary houses, to the second king (Krishna I) of one of which (the Rashtrakuta) we owe this amazing rock-hewn temple at Ellora in Hyderabad. Begun about A.D. 760 as a thank-offering for a victory over the Chalukya dynasty, and called the Kailasa after Siva's mountain paradise in the Himalayas, it was made by cutting a rectangular trench downward from the top of a cliff, and then carving the great central block thus left into a Siva temple complete in all its details—flat-roofed save for the pyramidal ' vimana ' symbolic of the snowy mountain, crowned by Siva's emblem, the stupa.

*From Havell, Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India, John Murray*



# HINDUISM AND THE GROWTH OF CASTE

Religious and Political Development in India during the Golden Age of Aryan Civilization

By E. B. HAVELL

Author of *The History of Aryan Rule in India*, *A Short History of India*, etc.

**B**RAHMAN influence became paramount in the Buddhist 'sangha,' the church which the Buddha founded on the model of the Indo-Aryan tribal assembly, at that period of Indian history covered by Chronicle XV. Buddhism itself, under that influence, was gradually merged in the current of Indian thought.

It must be understood, however, that the antithesis implied by the European terms 'Buddhism' and 'Hinduism' has no historical justification. The Buddha himself was as much a Hindu as his Brahman opponents, and did not quarrel with the fundamental ideas upon which Hindu society is based. Buddhism was only one of the many schools of religious thought to which the great Indo-Aryan social nexus called Hinduism gave birth. It is a common error to regard Hinduism as a definite religious creed, like Christianity or Islam. A Hindu is allowed the widest choice of philosophical and theological doctrines, provided that they do not conflict with the rules of caste which regulate the social and religious life of all Hinduism, particularly the strict rules of intermarriage and diet, which are the pivot of the ideas of caste purity.

The zealous propaganda of the Buddhist doctrines by the great emperor Asoka in the third century B.C. (see Chap. 40) had done much to change Brahmanical customs with regard to diet and sacrificial ritual. The soma-drinking and beef-eating priests of Vedic times in the Brahmanical Code of Manu (circa A.D. 200) appear converted into strict abstainers and vegetarians. But even Asoka in his Edicts enjoined reverence and liberality to Brahmans, who remained the

pillars of Hindu society and had most influence in the councils of the sangha. Fa-Hien, the Chinese traveller at the beginning of the fifth century A.D., noticed that under a Buddhist king the rules of caste were as strictly enforced as they are in a modern Hindu state.

The numerical growth of caste in the last seventeen centuries is best illustrated by the fact that, whereas the Code of Manu only specifies about fifty castes, at the present day there are about eight hundred sub-castes among Brahmans alone, none of which can intermarry and very few of which can dine together. These figures are an index to the number of different cults which

Hinduism has absorbed into its synthesis, and to the many different racial elements which enter into it. The Brahmans succeeded in using Vedic philosophy as the cement which bound Hindu society together, but failed to make the Brahmanical order racially homogeneous. Every foreign dynasty which forced an entrance into the Hindu pale contributed its quota to the Brahmanical priesthood. The great colonial enterprises of Hinduism also helped to widen the boundaries of caste. The total number of distinct castes in the present day has been estimated at about three thousand, and the number is still increasing. Even among Christian and Mahomedan converts from Hinduism caste retains its hold.

The origin of caste goes back to a very remote antiquity in India, and it cannot be explained merely as a superstition imposed upon the ignorant masses by a crafty and self-seeking priesthood.

The high-caste Brahman despises temple service and the vocation of priest. The idea of physical and spiritual purity which is the centre of the philosophy of caste was derived originally from the environment in which the Vedic Aryans lived. Their paradise was not located in a garden, but among the pure white peaks of the Himalayas, the Abode of Snow, where the Devas, the Shining Ones, had their thrones. When the Devas descended to earth they rode generally on white steeds; hence a white horse, bull or elephant was dedicated to the gods. The rivers which flowed from these virgin heights purified the ground they watered and made it fit for sacrifice.

But the holiest of all this holy ground was, and is to this day for Buddhists as well as for all Hindus, on the shores of the Lake Manasarovara, said to be the centre of the World Lotus, and regarded as the mythical source of all the great rivers of Asia. Here Brahma, the Creator, was enthroned in a city with four gates through which the waters of the lake issued. On the neighbouring mountain, Kailasa, according to

the Mahabharata, Vyasa received divine inspiration and taught the Vedas to his disciples. This was in a golden age when all 'Aryas' were Brahmans.

The Rig-Veda, the most ancient of the Hindu sacred books, classifies mankind in symbolical language on this regional basis. In the great original sacrifice of the body of the world spirit, Purusha, the Brahmans were created from his mouth (the mountain sources of rivers); the fighting men (Kshatriyas) from his arms, or the upland forests where they hunted and learnt the art of war; the traders (Vaisyas) from his thighs, or the riverways and roads along which they travelled; the Sudras, the servile agricultural class, from his feet, or the low-lying alluvial soil which was the first to be brought under the plough.

To this idea of regional purity was joined the conception of physical purity on the part of the sacrificer. Those who offered sacrifice to the high gods must themselves be clean and dressed in spotless white, like the Devas. Their habitual occupation and the food and drink they offered to the gods, and in which they partook, must likewise be clean. Meat offerings must be purified by fire. Another factor in the formation of caste was the conception of formal or technical purity.

In the course of time the ever increasing complication of tribal rites made the sacrificial service a highly specialised and hereditary profession. The least error in the performance of rites, a wrong word or false intonation of the hymns, might spoil the sacrifice and bring down the wrath of the Devas upon the tribe.

But perhaps the most potent impulse towards the exclusiveness of the caste system came from the belief that Sanskrit, the 'pure' speech of the Brahmans, was the actual language of the gods; that divine energy reposed in the Sanskrit 'mantras' (texts of a devotional nature, supposed to have been divinely inspired) and that proficiency in the science of mantra gave the Brahmans power to



**TWO OF INDIA'S MANY CASTES**

The original fourfold Indian caste system (of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras) is now minutely subdivided. These are a member of a high sub-caste of Brahmans (top), of the Vaishnava sect, as shown by the Vishnu mark on his forehead, and a Sudra of the potters' caste.



#### THE DEVAS OF INDIAN MYTHOLOGY

The idea of Hindu purity seems summed up in the Devas—divine beings from the snowy Himalayas. They are common to Brahmanism and Buddhism—these are on a fresco at Ajanta, a group of rock-cut monasteries and shrines forming a Buddhist university that flourished c. 200 B.C. to A.D. 600.

control the forces of nature, to accomplish any worldly desires and to acquire divine knowledge. The right mantra ensured the success of the sacrifice and was the keynote of the many domestic ceremonies at which the services of a Brahman were needed. An elaborate system of memorising by which the Vedas were handed down from one generation to another tended to limit this secret knowledge to the families of the upper hierarchy. These naturally looked askance at inter-marriage with foreigners, or with those who spoke the popular dialects ('prakrits'), from the fear that the divine language might be corrupted and the Vedic tradition lost to posterity. Caste, therefore, was a system of spiritual eugenics to promote the evolution of a higher race. The Hindu word for caste is 'jati,' meaning tribe or race.

Out of the many schools of philosophy and religious

doctrines which Hinduism originated there gradually emerged certain common ideas, generally accepted by all Hindus, which explained and justified caste. The first was the doctrine of reincarnation. A man's place in the caste system was not to be considered as a mere accident of birth, but as the inevitable result of actions, good or bad, done in a previous birth, according to the law of 'karma' (action), by which a man reaps what he sows, but yet remains master of his own destiny. If a man has to endure the hard lot of an out-caste in this life, it is on account of neglect of the moral law, 'dharma,' in a former existence. Dharma, derived from the Sanskrit root 'dhri' (to sustain), is another doctrine of Hinduism. It is the moral law which sustains the universe. By observance of the twofold dharma, the general law of mankind and the particular dharma of his station in this life, he may be born to Brahmanhood in the next.

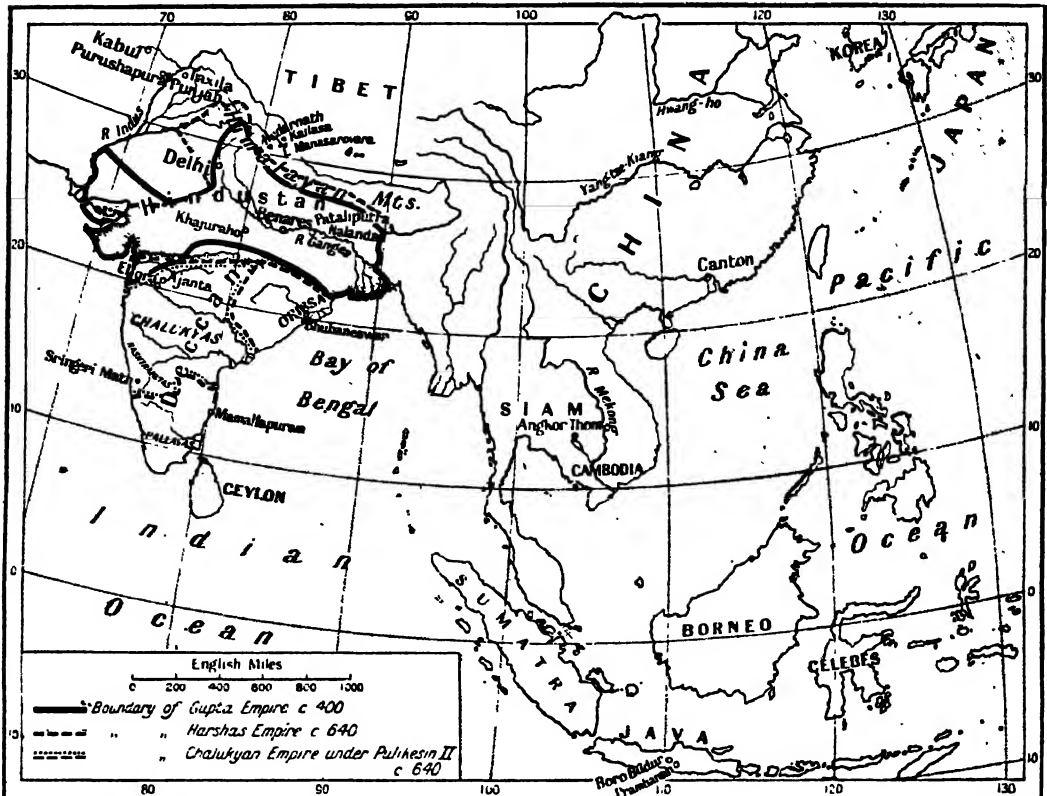
Caste is not merely a classification according to occupation, for a man may



#### THE LOTUS IN INDIAN SYMBOLISM

In the religious symbolism of India the lotus (*Nelumbium speciosum*) and water-lily (*Nymphaea*)—figures of the sun, of purity and of the sacred lake Manasarovara, the Lotus of the World—played a prominent part. This fresco of lotus flowers and fruit is from a Buddhist cave temple at Ajanta.

*From Havell, 'Ancient Architecture of India,' John Murray*



### THE POLITICS OF INDIA DURING THE RISE OF BRAHMANISM

In the third century India had been divided between the Kushans of the north, the mongrel 'satraps' of the west and the Andhras of the south. History thereafter is blank until the Gupta dynasty arose in Magadha with Chandragupta (320). It was the White Huns (c. 470) who overthrew the Guptas, and a period of confusion ensued until the reign of Harsha (606-648). At about the same time the Chalukyas and Pallavas ruled in the south, to be superseded by the Rashtrakutas in 973.

change his occupation without changing his caste. A Brahman may be a cook (for another Brahman), but yet so long as he is true to his dharma he is the spiritual superior of a Sudra king. Caste is supposed to indicate the spiritual status which a man has reached through his continual wandering in the worlds of birth and death. Brahmanhood is determined by birth only because through the sacraments of marriage observed by Brahmans it is believed that the qualities which constitute Brahmanhood, purity of thought, word and action, are most likely to be transmitted to the offspring: the souls in the higher spiritual planes awaiting reincarnation are attracted thereby to the wombs of the mothers most fitted to receive them. The lower castes are considered as those who do not control their passions and are therefore not qualified to take part in Brahmanical sacraments.

The social system, according to this theory, cannot be organized on the principle of universal equality, for men and women are not born equal, but in different stages of spiritual development: progress can only be made by obeying the universal law. Spiritual equality ('moksha' or 'nirvana') is attained when, through constantly following the divine law, body and mind acquire perfect purity and the chain of rebirth is broken.

• Caste rules imply that there is a government of caste. Hinduism has a form of self-government which has been its greatest strength through all India's many political changes. Most castes have a council of elders ('panchayat') to adjudicate on caste questions. When there is no panchayat an offender is liable to suffer from the reprobation of his caste fellows.

Castes are sometimes organized on a tribal basis and recognize a chieftain,

whose office is generally hereditary. He plays a patriarchal rôle, presides at caste festivities, marriage ceremonies, etc., and, assisted by a panchayat, acts as arbitrator or judge in disputes or scandals arising from breach of caste rules. In Hindu states disputes between different castes as to precedence are generally settled by the raja and his ministers; otherwise an appeal may be made to a council of pundits or to the head of a famous monastery.

Though caste cannot be changed in one lifetime, it is possible for a sub-caste to obtain a higher status within the caste if it can be proved that it has reached a higher degree of purity by abandoning impure habits, so that Brahmans have been accustomed to assist in its domestic rites. In such a case old custom is accepted as proof of caste status.

There is hardly a doctrine of Hinduism which has not at some time or other been disputed by Hindus. Many founders of Hindu sects have tried to abolish caste distinctions, with the result that the reformers have contributed one more element to caste formation: the new sect eventually takes its own place within the caste system. But the abolition of caste was not, as is commonly supposed, one of the principles of Buddhism. Anti-caste propaganda was an attempt by later Hindu reformers, like Ramanand, Kabir and Chaitanya, to reconcile Hinduism and Islam.

Like many other Kshatriyas of his time, the Buddha ridiculed the pretensions of the Brahman priesthood, but accepted caste as a part of the natural order of things. His aim (see Chap. 40) was not to reform Hindu society but to find a Way, the path of spiritual knowledge, by which all men could obtain release from the law of transmigration. The ascetic or monk who renounced all worldly ties had always been placed above the caste rules of the layman.

The Buddha maintained that his teaching was a true interpretation of the ancient Aryan tradition, and organized his 'sangha,' the Community of the Elect, in four grades, as the lay community was graded, assuming that the spiritual

law coincided with the natural law. He never admitted the fitness of everyone to enter upon the Path which led directly to Nirvana. No one could join the sangha who had social obligations to fulfil, such as the service of the state or service in the household. Neither could those who had violated social laws seek refuge within the select Buddhist community. The intellectual qualifications required for the disputations of the community were such that the martial Kshatriyas who laid the foundations of the Buddhist sangha became outclassed by the more cultured Brahmans.

Fa-Hien tells an interesting anecdote which shows that Brahmans within the sangha were as scrupulous in the observance of caste rules as those who rejected the doctrines of the Enlightened One. A certain Brahman of Pataliputra, noted for his profound learning, had done much to promote the cause of the sangha to which he was attached. The Buddhist king of the country, who revered him as his 'guru' (spiritual guide), often came to consult him, but did not presume to sit down in the holy man's presence, and if from a feeling of affection he should grasp the Brahman's hand the latter would immediately wash himself from head to foot.

Brahmanical influence within the sangha gradually effected a radical change in Buddhist doctrine, which led ultimately to the extinction of Buddhism in the land of its birth, or rather to its being absorbed in the main current of Hindu thought.

Buddhism, following the trend of Brahmanical orthodoxy, was transformed into a definite theistic creed, with the Buddha himself as the Supreme Being. He was translated to the Indian Olympus in the heart of the Himalayas and worshipped there, as he is by Buddhist pilgrims of the present day, as the Divine Yogi and Teacher of the Universal Law. At the beginning of the Christian era we find the Graeco-Roman craftsmen of Kanishka, the great Kushan king of North-Western India (see page 1408), representing the Buddha as enthroned in the Creator's place in the Hindu heaven, on the 'seed vessel of the World Lotus'—

**Caste observed  
by Buddhists**

**Attempts to  
abolish Caste**

that is, Lake Manasarovara. The thrilling account of the modern pilgrim's struggles to reach this sacred spot by Ekai Kawaguchi, the abbot of a Buddhist monastery in Japan, gives a touch of realism to the ancient legend of the great northern pilgrimage which is the climax of the story of the Mahabharata.

Kanishka's reign—in the second century after Christ—marked the beginning of the schism, largely promoted by a Brahman monk, Nagarjuna, by which Buddhism split into two sects: the Mahayana, or School of the Great Vehicle, and the Hinayana, that of the Little Vehicle.

The Buddha was one of the Kshatriyas, the warrior aristocracy which frequently disputed the spiritual authority of the Brahmans. The primitive Buddhist church, without absolutely repudiating the idea of a Divine Ruler, declined to attach itself to any theological cult of its own time, but laid stress on the moral order of the universe—dharma. As there was nothing higher than that law, it prescribed a code of ethics, the eight-fold path, embodied in the discipline of the sangha; by following this the chain of rebirth might be broken

and the soul could obtain a cessation of its wanderings in the sensual world. The right path was the path of knowledge ('jnana'), the only direct path to Nirvana, but the sangha imparted this knowledge in the vernacular instead of in Sanskrit, the divine speech of the Brahmans.

Incidentally the Buddha, in the rules of his Order, forbade all 'the low arts of divination, spells, omens, astrology, sacrifices to gods, witchcraft and quackery' with which Brahmanical theology had been associated. This prohibition extended to the decoration of monasteries and stupas: no human form must be drawn, painted or carved. Art was suspect, being often used as a vehicle of black magic.

The Mahayanist school recast the teaching of primitive Buddhism in a Brahmanical mould. Dharma, the general law of right-  
eousness, and the particular ethical qualities

**Mahayanist School  
of Buddhism**

contained in it, were personified and placed in a series of spiritual planes as divine rulers. The historical Buddha was explained as one and not the chief of the many Buddhas and Bodhisattvas controlling the 'dharma-dhatu' or spiritual essence pervading all space. Instead of the ascetic path of knowledge the Mahayanist preferred the path of devotion, by which he hoped to gain the favour of the particular Bodhisattva he adored and to be reborn in a higher spiritual sphere. By the gradual ascent of the spiritual ladder, perhaps after thousands of rebirths, he hoped to rise above a mundane existence and become a Bodhisattva himself. The Hinayana school, however, which followed the ancient Pali Canon of the sangha with its strict rule of celibacy, regarded the new philosophy as rank heresy.

The worship of relics, jealously guarded in massively built stupas (see page 1212), had given early Buddhism the emotional satisfaction which the ordinances of the Blessed One were intended to suppress, and frequently provided a casus belli for rival dynasties when the saintly Asoka's ardent propaganda for a universal peace (see pages 1215-17) ended with his death. The ideal Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the new Buddhism could not supply relics for worship, but it gaye the royal crafts-



**VISHNU THE PRESERVER**

Buddhist quietism was inadequate to the age of turmoil that the Guptas ended; so a robust religious attitude appeared, summed up by the legendary hero Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu. This is a ninth century statue of Vishnu.

*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

men a wide scope for their imagination and the devout the objects they needed for concentrating their minds on their guardian deities. A regular system of mental concentration, known as 'yoga,' which was an essential part of the Brahmanical ritual, thus became incorporated in Mahayanist religious exercises.

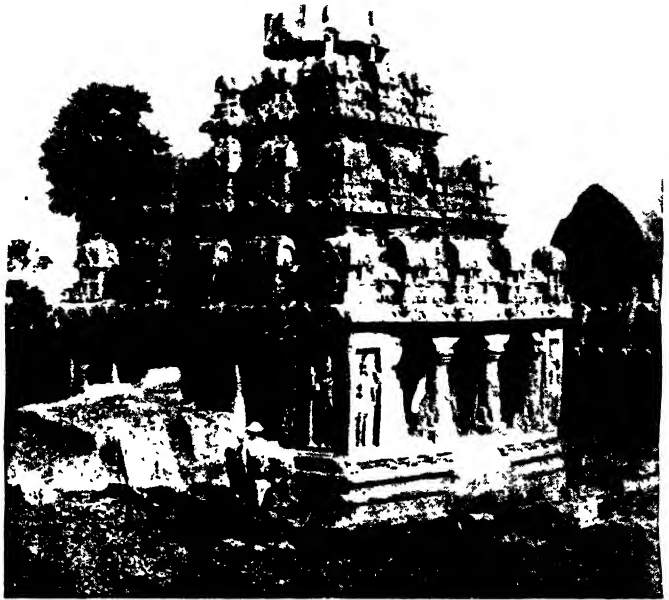
How Kanishka gave a new Graeco-Indian artistic form to the Mahayanist pantheon in Gandhara has been shown in Chapter 49. Unlike the orthodox Buddhists of India his foreign craftsmen had no conscientious objections to portraying the divine Buddha; but the foreign elements were soon assimilated and reshaped. The divine ideal of Indian art was not a hybrid Apollo in the garb of a Gandharan monk but the Great Thinker enthroned on the Himalayan Lotus, or the Divine Pillar whose mystic body maintained the universal order.

This revolutionary change in Buddhist thought was accompanied by another, the gradual disuse of its old literary language, Pali, a dialect of the province of Magadha, where the Buddha himself preached. The Brahmins who entered the sangha neither gave up their caste observances nor ceased to use their sacred language, Sanskrit. As Mahayanist doctrines spread Sanskrit began to be used by northern Buddhists both in their texts and in their oral disputations, until at the time of the Mahomedan conquest Sanskrit was almost the only written language of Indian literati.

Political influences also helped the Brahmanical revival after the fall of the Kushan dynasty. The Brahmins as hereditary interpreters of the Vedas were not exclusively concerned with religious doctrine, though a congress of religions in medieval India was a greater event than a battle between rival war-lords, and the abbot of the great monastery kept up

more than regal state. Sanskrit literature embraced all kinds of knowledge. The Brahmins constituted a final court of appeal in politics, military strategy, sociology and the theory of art and science.

Buddhism, moreover, was opposed by another school of religious thought which offered an alternative approach to Nirvana



#### BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE FOR A HINDU SHRINE

A group of monolithic shrines at Mamallapuram show that there was no real cleavage between Buddhist and Hindu thought; though mostly Siva temples, they are modelled on Buddhist 'viharas' or monasteries. This, called Dharma Raja's Rath (c. A.D. 700), is in the form of a four-storeyed vihara, and has miniature 'chaityas' (Buddhist shrines) round the cornices.

*Photo, Rev. J. P. Shrimpton*

—one which had the sanction of the great Aryan hero, Krishna—in the Bhagavad Gita. This was the path of service, the 'karma-marga,' which the caste system marked out for everyone. It was the duty of the Kshatriya, when occasion called, to fight for the preservation of dharma and not to retire into the seclusion of the cloister. Buddhism, though it professed not to disturb the social order, was a danger to the Hindu state because the attractions of the sangha, when it became a prosperous state institution under Asoka's patronage, withdrew from military service too many of the élite of the fighting caste. When Asiatic



Greeks, Scythians, Parthians and the vanguard of the Huns began to pour through the gates of India the sangha could not stay the onrush of the impure invaders. Buddhism gradually took them into its fold, and the caste system found places for the new-comers, just as to-day it adjusts itself to modern conditions.

But the pure-blooded Kshatriyas and Brahmans never viewed with equanimity the usurpations of political power by foreigners, and when at last, under the Guptas in A.D. 320, a federation of the aristocratic Aryan clans established the strongest empire India had known since Asoka's day, the Brahmans came into their own again as political leaders. Under Gupta patronage the great Kshatriya epic, the Mahabharata, in which the Bhagavad Gita is incorporated, was re-edited and popularised as a thesaurus of Aryan religion, ethics and statecraft. The cult of Krishna as a divine teacher, one of the incarnations of Vishnu, a member of the great trinity of Hindu gods, began to take its place as one of the most influential schools of Hindu thought.

Buddhism in its Mahayana form spread eastwards and took deep root in China, but its prestige in India was fast declining. In A.D. 520 southern China became more important in the hierarchy of Buddhism than India itself, since Bodhidharma, the spiritual head of the sangha in India, who was said to be the twenty-eighth successor of the Buddha, removed his seat to Canton, where he was received with high honour. China had long been in close communication with India both by the northern caravan routes and by sea.

Chandragupta (c. A.D. 320) and his son Samudragupta (c. A.D. 326-375) fought for the liberation of Hindu India from the

domination of the Turki, Saka and other non-Aryan dynasties which acknowledged the suzerainty of the Kushan emperors at Purushapura and Taxila. The Gupta era was the classic age of Hindu literature, art and science. The Sanskrit language, which is the corner-stone of Hindu culture

and the scientific foundation of the caste system, was perfected by grammarians and lexicographers. The Dharma-sastras, on Hindu morals and social laws, and Niti-sastras, on the political economy of a Hindu state, were re-written by the court pundits. Hindu artists re-shaped the crude imaginings of the Gandharan school according to the traditional concepts of Brahman philosophy. The divine Buddha was no longer portrayed in the guise of an Indo-Roman monk but as the Buddhist counterpart of Siva, the perfect Yogi of India, or as an avatar of Vishnu. Thus Buddhism outwardly and inwardly was transformed by Brahman thinkers.



THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

Though the importance of the Buddha's cult waned under the Guptas, he was still regarded by Hindu theologians the greatest of the early 'gurus' (teachers). This serenely contemplative head is a fine piece of Gupta sculpture.

*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

The legendary days of the Ramayana, the epic of the first Aryan conquest of southern India, were recalled by Samudragupta's brilliant campaign, in which he forced the kings of Orissa and the Deccan and the Pallava rulers of the extreme south to pay him tribute. To give it religious sanction the ancient Vedic ritual, prescribed for an Aryan chieftain who aspired to be king of kings, was revived. A riderless steed, under the spell of Brahman mantras, was let loose to show the army the path of victory and to become the victim of the sacrifice which concluded the campaign. One of the gold medals struck by Samudragupta to celebrate his exploits, showing horse and sacrificial altar, is now in the British Museum.

Conquests of  
Samudragupta

Samudragupta, though a strict Hindu of the Vaishnava cult, in no way used his political power to persecute other religious sects. The dharma of a Hindu king as defender of the faith was to give protection to all religious devotees, and few of them failed in their duty in this respect. Philosophy and religion were favourite subjects of debate at royal courts, and a king frequently summoned a parliament of religions to settle points of doctrine upon which the court pundits could not agree. But it would have

**Religion under the Guptas** been a flagrant outrage upon the Indo-Aryan sense of royal justice for a king to attempt to controvert any form of religious argument except by the weapons of logic used in the debating hall. Neither did the great monasteries of Buddhism establish a narrow sectarian system of teaching. They were real universities and schools of comparative religion. Hsuan Tsang, or Yuan Chwang (see page 3274) records that at Nalanda eighteen Hinayana schools were represented, and that in this Buddhist institution the study of the Vedas was not excluded.

Buddhism continued to receive a large share of state patronage in India long after the fall of the Gupta dynasty, though the gross superstitions of relic worship may have impaired its intellectual vitality and debased its ritual. The pundits of the sangha in India were eventually defeated, not by militarism, nor by political opponents, but by the same intellectual weapons used by the Enlightened One against the Brahmins of his time. The noble ethics of Buddhism made a permanent impression on Hindu thought, but the explanation of the problem of existence which the Buddha offered in the sixth century B.C. was not comprehensive enough to satisfy the philosophic mind of India in its maturity.

The champion of Brahman orthodoxy who is credited with having given the final blow to the doctrines of Buddhism, as they were then

taught in the universities of India, was the great prophet of modern Hinduism, Sankaracharya. He was the most eminent of the exponents of Vedic philosophy in South India who set up the ideal of the perfect Yogi, Siva, in place of the divine Buddha, and contested with Buddhist and Jain pundits in those ceremonious tournaments of wits which were often more important functions in Hindu society than a royal durbar. Hsuan Tsang, the learned Chinese pilgrim who graduated in the famous Buddhist university of Nalanda in the seventh century A.D., gives a graphic account of one of them over which he presided by order of the emperor Harsha, after having nailed his thesis in defence of Mahayanist teaching to the gateway of the pavilion as a challenge to any of the six thousand pundits who attended.

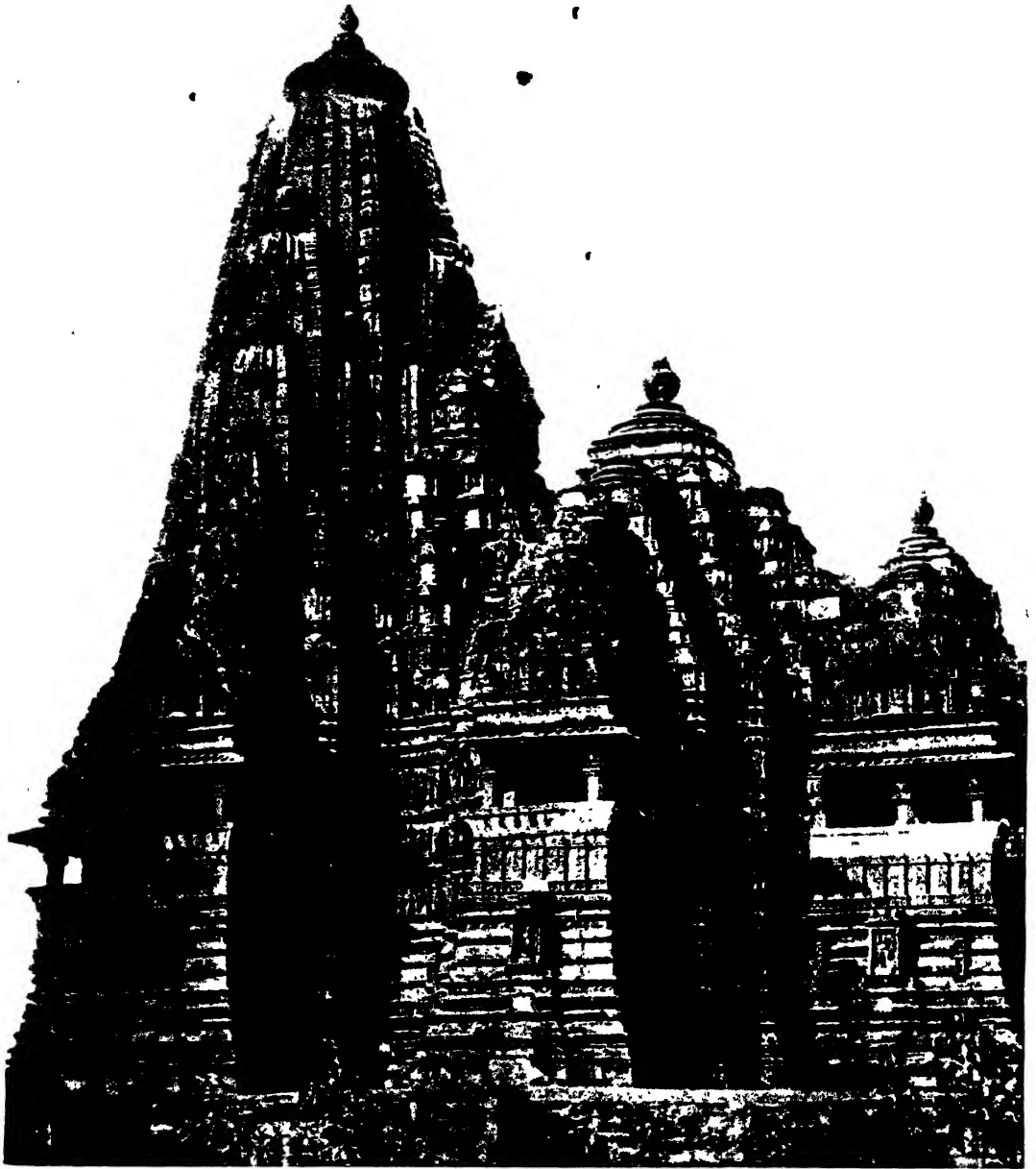
Sankaracharya, who took up the challenge a century and a half later, was prepared for the contest by a long course of study; for only an acknowledged master of rhetoric and logic would win the 'letters of victory' which were certificates of success in these academic disputations. After studying under a famous Vedic scholar of southern India, Govinda by name, he renounced all worldly ties, as the Buddha had done, by taking the vow of a 'sannyasin' (a devotee who turns his back upon the world). He then proceeded to Benares, the chief university of Vedic studies. There he won high distinction and gathered round him a large number of pupils. It is believed



**SYMBOL OF A GUPTA VICTORY**

A medal of Samudragupta (A.D. 326-375), second of the Gupta dynasty that ushered in the most glorious period of Hindu civilization, shows the white steed which led his armies to victory in a great southern campaign and thereafter formed the victim of the 'aswamedha' sacrifice.

*British Museum*



### THE GOLDEN AGE OF INDIA EXPRESSED IN STONE

The Guptas had made India safe for Aryan civilization, and under them and afterwards down to the Moslem conquests Hindu architecture flourished. It may be said to have reached its apex in the temples at Khajuraho, of which the Kandariya Mahadeva appears above, a Vishnu temple as its tall 'sikhara,' or spire, crowned with the lotus emblem shows. On the right is the domed 'mandapam' or hall of congregation. The group was built by the Chandela kings and the earliest dates from c. 950.

*Courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum*

that his principal works, commentaries on the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, which established his fame as an exponent of the monistic philosophy of the Vedanta, were written here.

Thus fully equipped, he started off with a great retinue of disciples on one of those campaigns of propaganda which

Hindu historians invest with all the glamour of medieval knight-errantry, to challenge any opponents to meet him in the intellectual arena. Possibly if the Buddha and Sankaracharya could have met in argument these two great exponents of Hindu thought would have found a way of mutual reconciliation.

But the Buddhist philosophy of the ninth century A.D. could not resist the attack of Sankaracharya's keen logic. One after another of its acknowledged champions retired discomfited. The legendary account of Sankaracharya's combats at the royal courts, where the pundits of many rival schools confronted him in argument, reads like the spiritual analogy of the Gupta emperor's triumphal progress with the Vedic sacrificial horse.

Sankaracharya's career illustrates the intellectual process by which the religious orders of Hinduism originated. The chief 'guru' (teacher) of the Sringeri Math, the most famous of the monasteries of southern India founded by Sankaracharya with the princely donations he collected in his great campaign, is still recognized as the spiritual head of the Saiva cult. When his mission was ended Sankaracharya retired to Kedarnath, one of the Himalayan retreats dedicated to Siva, so that he might on this hallowed ground reach the goal of every Hindu devotee—'moksha' or 'mukti,' release from the law of rebirth.

Outside the religious orders the line of demarcation between the numerous Hindu sects is now so difficult to draw that the British census officials have given up the attempt to classify them statistically. But the sectarian categories, Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakta, indicate summarily the three principal schools of metaphysics which evolved from the Hindu philosophical laboratory, though, as in other religious systems, their nominal adherents represent many different degrees of intellectual and spiritual development.

The Saivas and Vaishnavas, whose philosophy

adopted the principle of the fatherhood of God, were sociologically allied to the Indo-Aryan patriarchal system. The Saktas, who worship the Supreme Being as the universal mother, derive from the Dravidian or non-Aryan social organizations of the primitive matriarchal type which Hinduism adapted to the philosophical synthesis of the Upanishads.

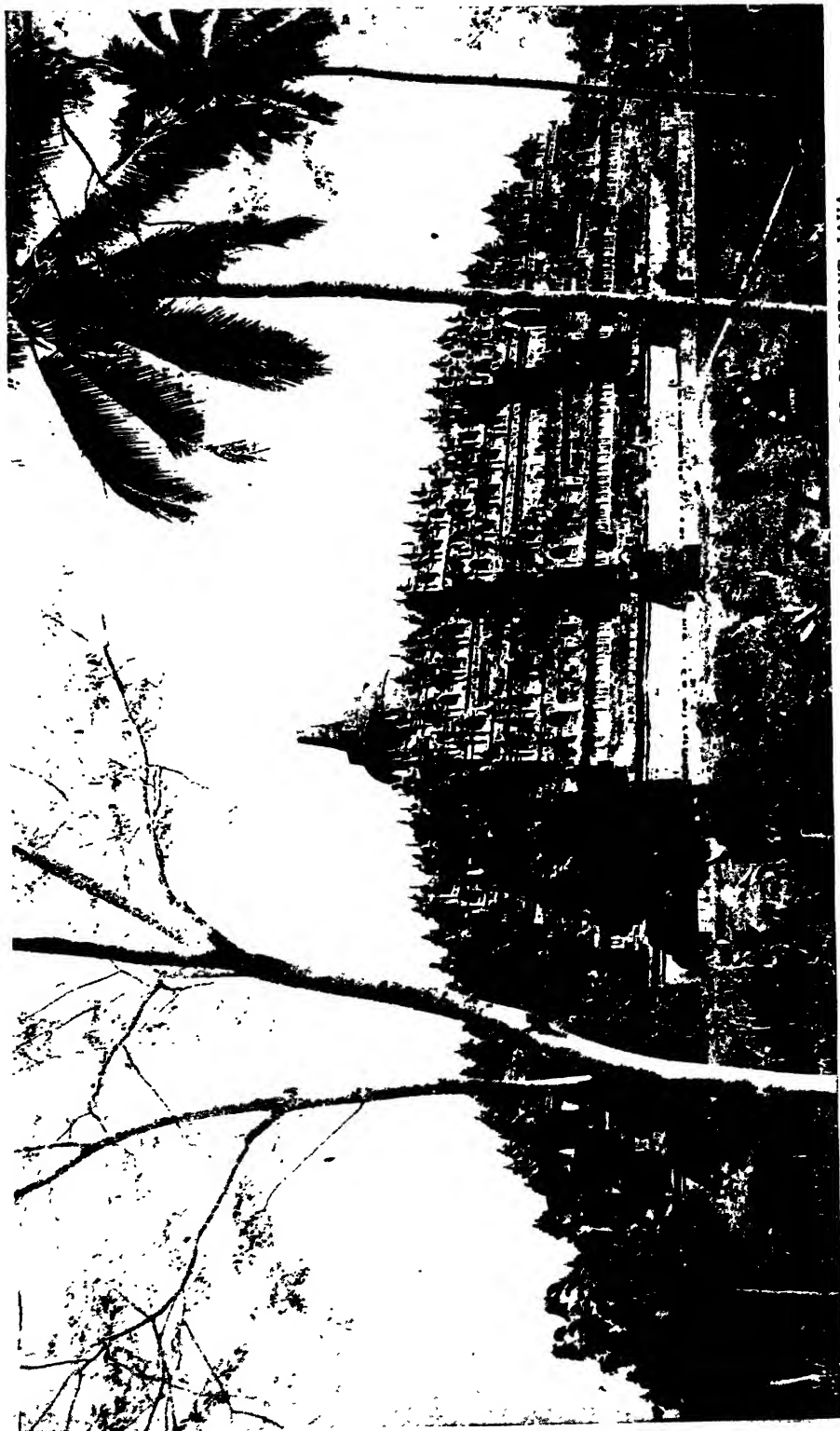
It is frequently assumed, without justification, that the caste system and the absorption of the intelligentsia in metaphysical studies made Hindu India indifferent to scientific pursuits and unenterprising in worldly affairs. But Hindu philosophy only made religion the supreme concern of life; its social system, embracing all sorts and conditions of men, gave full scope to every kind of activity, though it put duty to society higher than



• **WITHIN THE COURT OF THE KAILASA**

The Kailasa (see page 2392) rests on a plinth carved in the guise of a serried rank of elephants that seem to bear the temple on their backs. The pillared cloisters that surround the great rock-cut court (left), together with certain ancillary shrines, were hewn at a later date than the temple, and contain magnificent bas-reliefs.

*Photo, F. Deauville Walker*



**BORO BUDUR : STUPENDOUS MEMORIAL OF INDIAN CULTURE IN THE HEART OF DISTANT JAVA**

Boro Budur, the most magnificent achievement of Indian art, lies in the heart of Java, nearly 2,000 miles in a direct line from the seats of northern Indian civilization—striking testimony to the extent and vigour of Indian colonising enterprise. It is a low hill cased in a pyramidal shell of intricately carved black stone; and the reliefs—two miles of them, which one views by walking round the successive terraces as one ascends—tell with a wealth of detail the story of the Buddha's life in various incarnations; for the monument belongs to the Mahayanist or northern school of Buddhism.

*Photo, George P. Lewis*

individual freedom. Caste rules paid the deepest respect to religion and to learning, but did not require a Brahman to forget his duty to society at large. Provided that he never neglected the study of the Vedas—for an illiterate Brahman placed himself on a level with the out-caste—he might be a statesman, soldier or lawyer. The Code of Manu expressly mentions farming and trade as lawful though not desirable occupations for Brahmans. In the service of religion Brahmans might be, and frequently were, astronomers, mathematicians, architects, engineers and artists. In fact, any career was open to them which did not involve loss of self-respect by contact with impurity.

The era of Hindu political supremacy which reached its climax in the period under review, first in northern India and afterwards in the south, was characterised by intense activity in science, art and commercial enterprise. Hindu India, having assimilated what it learnt from intercourse with the Roman Empire, was leading the world in astronomy and mathematics. Much of the mathematical

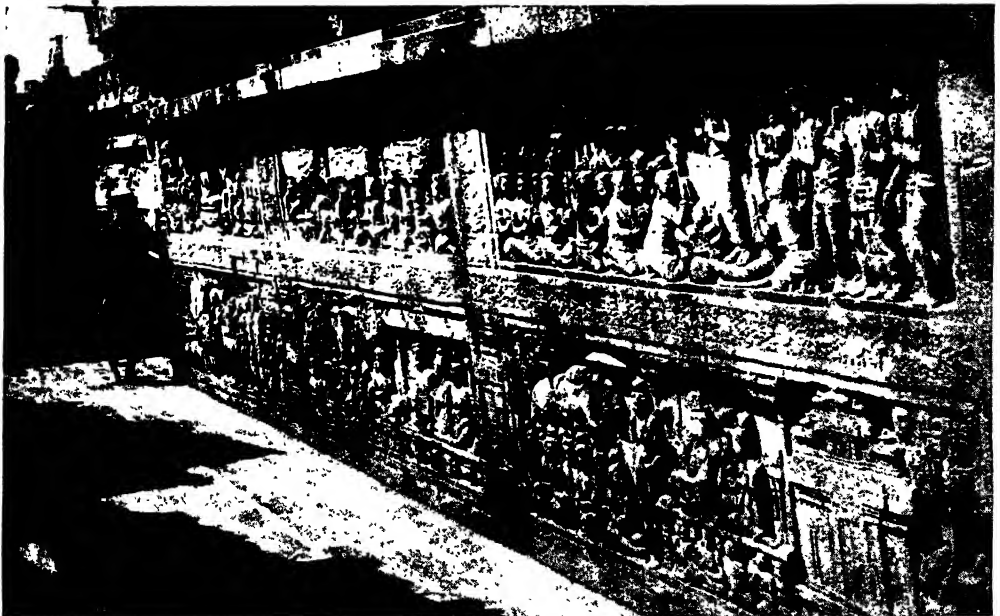


**INDIAN FARERS ON THE SEA**

Among the Boro Budur sculptures a most spirited rendering of a ship—two-masted, square-sailed, with outriggers and evidently of large capacity—gives a glimpse of how communications were kept up between India and Java.

*From Havell, Indian Sculpture and Painting*

and scientific knowledge which Arabian scholars in later times brought to Europe was borrowed by them from classical Sanskrit treatises. Among the symbols and methods they took from Hindu mathematics were the so-called "Arabic numerals, the decimal system of notation, the sines and versed sines.



**BUDDHIST BELIEFS RECOUNTED IN MILES OF SCULPTURED STONE**

Boro Budur consists of seven terraces (not counting the foundation platform) of which the four lowermost are square, the rest circular. Crowning the whole is a great stupa, or relic shrine. On the circular terraces are hundreds of miniature stupas containing statues of the Buddha; round the square ones run those reliefs that are the glory of the place. On this, the uppermost of the four, the sculptures relate to the Dhyani-Buddhas, or celestial counterparts of the earthly Buddhas.

*Photo, George P. Lewis*

Algebra was a Hindu rather than an Arabian science. Sir John Herschel noted that the great Hindu astronomer of the seventh century A.D., Brahmagupta, employed a general method for the resolution of indeterminate problems of the second degree: 'an investigation which actually baffled the skill of every modern analyst till the time of Lagrange's solution.' De Morgan, in commenting on the fact that Hindu mathematicians were able to solve without the aid of the differential calculus problems which Europeans could not solve without it, asserted that, if by some catastrophe all Christian and Mahomedan culture were obliterated, Sanskrit literature and science contained what might well be the nucleus of a new civilization. Both he and his contemporary, George Boole, were deeply impressed by the debt which

modern European science, especially the higher branches of mathematics, owes to Hindu investigations.

It was not merely the richness of her natural resources that made India the world's mart. It was in a great measure due to the skill and inventions of her artisans; the enterprise and ingenuity of her shipwrights; the perfection attained in the chemistry and technique of dyeing, weaving and metal working; the organization of industry and the great irrigation works which assisted agriculture. India at the height of Hindu supremacy became the greatest maritime and colonial power of the world. Her seamen in the Indian Ocean were what the Phoenicians had been in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. The seaways of India and China bore a very large traffic of merchants, pilgrims and emigrants. When Bodhidharma, the



**BENEATH THE PINNACLES OF ANGKOR VAT, THE WONDER OF CAMBODIA**

At no other period were Indian commerce and communications at a higher pitch than under the Guptas and immediately afterwards. A defeated army, it seems, could make its way from central India to Indo-China, if this legendary explanation of the mysterious culture that has left its vast ruins in the jungles of Cambodia is correct. Above are the tank and superb flight of steps in the western façade of Angkor Wat, a temple built for Hindu worship but finally consecrated to Buddhism.

*Photo, E.N.A.*



Buddhist patriarch, moved his seat to Canton in A.D. 520 he took the sea-route, sailing from a South Indian port. Southern China even before this time contained a large number of Indian colonists.

It is likely that the traffic of pilgrims to India from the flourishing Eastern colonies was considerable, for the Buddhists and Hindus of Java and Cambodia named their cities, like the Anglo-Saxon colonists of modern times, in loving memory of the motherland. The temples were dedicated to the holy places of India: in the rite of circumambulation their worshippers kept always in mind the great pilgrimage to the shrine of the divine Yogi in the Himalayas.

There was a line of communications connecting India and Ceylon with the colonies in Sumatra, Java, Cambodia and the Far East, so that voyages of fifty days or longer were not uncommon. This much frequented route sometimes offered a convenient retreat for a defeated army. The maritime kingdoms of India possessed fleets so large that thousands of fighting men, artificers and followers could be transported overseas. The

**Indian enterprise  
in distant lands**

result of this was that, in the troublous times when Hinduism was fighting to repel the foreign invaders and engaged in frequent internal wars, powerful Buddhist and Hindu dynasties were established in Java and Cambodia, where the magnificent monuments of Boro Budur, Prambanam and Angkor Thom testify to the amazing energy and genius of Indian city builders. Fergusson, writing soon after the discovery of the buried cities of Cambodia in the latter half of the nineteenth century, observed that 'historically they are infinitely less important to us than the ruins of Nimrud and Nineveh, but in an architectural point of view they are more astonishing.'



**JUNGLE-CHOKED GATE OF ANGKOR THOM**

Angkor Vat may be dated about A.D. 650. The ruins of the city, Angkor Thom, whose rulers, the Khmers, built it, are some three miles away: its eastern gate is flanked by balustrades consisting of the sacred seven-headed naga or cobra and by ranks of supernal beings who support its body in their arms

It should be remembered that the unadaptability of caste rules and the mental inertia of the masses which are characteristic of modern Hinduism are largely the product of modern conditions and of the political chaos caused by the fierce conflict for its existence which the Hindu state waged for many centuries against the military power of Islam. Under Hindu political supremacy there was an active co-operation between all classes of society for the common good which found expression in the rich flowering of Indian art and craft, in beneficent public works, in splendid monuments of art and in scientific investigations. The organization of powerful trade and craft guilds, the influence of popular assemblies and of the public debating halls helped to control vested interests and to adjust inconvenient customs to the needs of the state. Co-operation made the caste system not a hindrance but a very potent instrument of progress in the intellectual and economic life of India.

# TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XVI

- 732 Western advance of Saracens broken at Poitiers.  
737 Theuderic dies; no 'King of the Franks.'  
741 Charles Martel succeeded by Pepin and Carloman.  
Emperor Leo III succeeded by Constantine V (Copronymus).  
Zacharias pope (to 752).  
742 Childeric, last Merwing, made titular king.  
Birth of Charles the Great (Charlemagne).  
744 Accession of Merwan II, last Ommiad khalif.  
747 Carloman abdicates. Pepin sole duke of Franks.  
750 Ommiad Khalifate ended by battle of the Zab.  
First Abbasid khalif, Abdallah (Al-Saffah).  
Massacre of Ommiads; Abd er-Rahman escapes.  
India; Sindhi revolts and expels the Arabs.  
752 Pepin first Carolingian king of the Franks.  
Aistulf of Lombardy takes Ravenna.  
753 Iconoclast Council of Constantinople.  
754 Pepin's first Lombard campaign. Aistulf submits.  
Mansur second Abbasid khalif. Capital transferred from Damascus to Bagdad. Institution of wazirate and mercenary bodyguard.  
755 First Bulgar War of Constantine Copronymus.  
Offa king of Mercia, to 797.  
755-6 Pepin's second Lombard campaign. Aistulf compelled to cede Ravenna exarchate to Papacy.  
756 Abd er-Rahman (Ommiad) established as independent emir at Cordova (see 750).  
759 Pepin expels Saracens from Narbonne and drives them permanently behind the Pyrenees.  
761 Constantine begins persecution of the monks.  
764 Second Bulgar War of Constantine.  
768 Pepin dies. Charles Charlemagne and Carloman joint kings of the Franks.  
769 Aquitaine finally subjected to the crown.  
771 Carloman dies. Charlemagne sole king of Franks.  
772 First expedition to Saxony.  
Pope Stephen appeals to Charlemagne against Desiderius of Lombardy.  
773 Lombard campaign of Charlemagne.  
774 Submission of Desiderius. Charlemagne annexes the Lombard crown.  
775 Leo IV succeeds Constantine Copronymus.  
Mahdi succeeds Mansur at Bagdad.  
Charlemagne's first Saxon campaign.  
776 Charlemagne's second Saxon campaign.  
777 Charlemagne celebrates subjugation of Saxony at the Diet of Paderborn.  
778 Charlemagne, invited by Moorish rebels, invades Spain and retires. Fall of Roland at Roncevaux.  
779 Saxon revolt; third Saxon campaign.  
780 Constantine VI succeeds Leo IV. Iconoclast reaction under regency of Irene.  
782 Fourth Saxon campaign. Massacre of prisoners.  
783-5 Conquest and submission of Saxony.  
784 Saracens extort tribute from Irene.  
785 Advance of Franks in N.E. Spain (Catalonia).  
786 Haroun al-Raschid khalif.  
787 First Danish raid on English coast.  
788 Dukedom of Bavaria broken up and incorporated.  
Cordova: Hisham succeeds Abd er-Rahman as emir.  
789 Charlemagne subjugates northern Slavs.  
790 Charlemagne's Avar campaign.  
Constantine seizes control by a coup d'état.  
795 Progress of Frank arms in Catalonia; appointment of a margrave of the Spanish March.  
Leo III pope, to 816.  
796 Victories of Pepin over the Avars.  
797 Irene deposes and blinds Constantine, and herself reigns as empress till 802.  
799 First Danish raid on coast of Aquitaine.  
800 Pope Leo at the Christmas-day service in S. Peter's crowns Charlemagne Roman emperor. Inauguration of the Holy Roman Empire (to 1806).  
801 Barcelona taken from the Spanish Moors.  
802 Irene deposed; Nicephorus Eastern emperor.  
Egbert king of Wessex (to 839).  
803 Haroun destroys the Barmecide family.  
805 Tunis independent under the Aghlabid dynasty.  
Submission of the Avars. They are not incorporated, but left dependent and tributary.  
807 Hakim emir at Cordova.  
808 Godred the Dane harries Frisia.  
809 Haroun al-Raschid dies. Emin khalif.  
810 Godred killed. Truce with the Danes.  
811 Capture of Tortosa by the Franks.  
Nicephorus killed on Bulgar campaign.  
812 Accession of Michael I (Rhagabes); he recognizes the Western Empire.  
Hakim cedes conquests between the Pyrenees and the Ebro; Moors evacuate Catalonia.  
813 Michael I deposed by Leo V (the Armenian).  
Death of Emin; Mamun khalif.  
814 Death of Charlemagne. His only surviving son, Louis the Pious, emperor.  
817 Partition of Aachen; Lothair co-emperor and king of Italy, Pepin king of Aquitaine, Lewis (the German) king of Bavaria.  
818 Revolt and death of Bernard of Italy.  
820 Leo V assassinated; accession of the Amorion Michael II (the Stammerer).  
821 Abd er-Rahman II succeeds Hakim at Cordova.  
822 Danish attacks on Frisia renewed.  
Birth of Charles (the Bald)—the source of many partitions and consequent civil wars.  
823 Battle of Ellendune transfers ascendancy in England from Mercia to Wessex.  
Crete captured by Saracen corsairs.  
827 Saracens of Tunis, incited by the traitor Euphemus, invade Sicily and begin the conquest.  
829 Egbert acknowledged as over-king in England.  
Theophilus succeeds Michael II.  
Louis proposes to provide a kingdom for the child Charles at the expense of his brothers. Beginning of civil wars.  
831 Mamun invades Cappadocia. Beginning of a prolonged war between Empire and Khalifate.  
Slow but continuous progress of the Aghlabid conquest of Sicily (till 850).  
833 Mutassim succeeds Mamun at Bagdad.  
War of Louis with his sons. The Lugenfeld. Deposition and restoration of Louis.  
835 Danes sack Utrecht.  
839 Ethelwulf succeeds Egbert as over-king.  
840 Death of Louis the Pious. Lothair emperor.  
Rival dukes of Benevento invite Saracen aid from Sicily and Crete.  
841 Defeat of Lothair at Fontenay by Lewis the German and Charles the Bald.  
Danes plunder Rouen.  
Mutassim dies; Wathek khalif.  
842 The bi-lingual Oath of Strasbourg.  
Saracens in Sicily capture Messina.  
Michael III (the Drunkard), aged four, succeeds Theophilus. Fourteen years' regency of Theodora.  
843 Western Empire. Partition of Verdun.  
Lothair (emperor) takes Middle Kingdom, with Italy.  
Lewis (first German king) the Trans-Rhenish territories, Charles the Bald (first king of France) the West.  
844 Pictish and Scots kingdoms united under Kenneth MacAlpine. The name of Pict disappears slowly.  
845 Lewis, son of Lothair, king of Italy.  
Danes plunder Paris and are bought off.  
847 Danes capture and occupy Bordeaux.  
Leo IV pope, to 855.  
Mutawakkil succeeds Wathek as khalif.  
849 Pope Leo's victory over Saracens (Ostia).  
Alfred the Great born.  
852 Mahommed succeeds Abd er-Rahman II at Cordova.  
855 Lothair dies. His son Lewis II emperor; he remains in Italy; Trans-Alpine Middle Kingdom divided between his brothers Lothair and Charles.  
Danes winter in Sheppey.  
Michael III takes control at Constantinople.  
857 Michael deposes Ignatius and makes Photius patriarch; denounced by Pope Benedict III.  
858 Nicholas I pope.  
859 Fall of Enna completes Saracen conquest of Sicily.  
860 Ethelbert king of England; Many Danish raids.  
861 Conversion of Bulgars to Christianity.  
862 Nicholas excommunicates the patriarch Photius.  
863 Ethelred k. of England. Danish invasion begins.  
866 Synod of Constantinople condemns the Heresies of the Latin church. Permanent severance of the Greek and Latin churches.  
867 Murder of Michael. Basil the Macedonian first emperor of the Macedonian dynasty (to 1056).

## Chronicle XVI

# EMERGING OF THE NATIONS: 732-867

**I**N the year A.D. 732 Charles Martel's great victory at Poitiers set the seal upon Leo's achievement fourteen years earlier at Constantinople. Leo and Charles between them had fixed the limit to the westward expansion of Islam for more than six centuries to come, just one hundred years after the death of the Prophet. Europe belonged to the West, Asia and Africa to the East; but the West still kept its hold on Asia Minor, while the East had laid its grip on the most western peninsula of Europe.

The year, however, is significant also for another reason. It marked the collapse of the last attempt of the Eastern Roman Empire to assert its authority in the West by force of arms. The hour was drawing near for a new Holy Roman Empire to arise, again claiming the Eternal City itself as its centre, the abode of its spiritual head. It will be useful, then, to start with as clear an idea as may be of the powers which dominated or were about to dominate Europe.

### **Dominion remaining to the Caesars**

**C**ONSTANTINOPLE still enjoyed the prestige of the empire of the Caesars; for the oriental, the City of Constantine was 'Rome'; but its face was turned not to the West but to the East. Asia Minor formed the larger part of its dominion. In Europe the Danube had long ceased to be its northern boundary; the interior of the Balkan peninsula had passed into the occupation of the tribes which had flooded over the Danube since the departure of the Goths, mixed Bulgars and Slavs in Moesia and Slavs on the middle Danube. A Bulgarian kingdom with only the most shadowy subordination to the Empire was already established, and a Serbian kingdom was shaping. In Italy there was still an imperial exarch at Ravenna; there were imperial governors in Sicily and Calabria; and at the head

of the Adriatic Venice chose to own the imperial overlordship mainly because it involved her in no inconvenient obligations. The Papacy made a certain profession of loyalty to the Empire, as a protection to itself from Lombard aggression; but would make no abatement of claims to spiritual pre-eminence wholly incompatible with those of Constantinople, while, on the great controversy of the day—image worship—its views and those of the imperial government were irreconcilable.

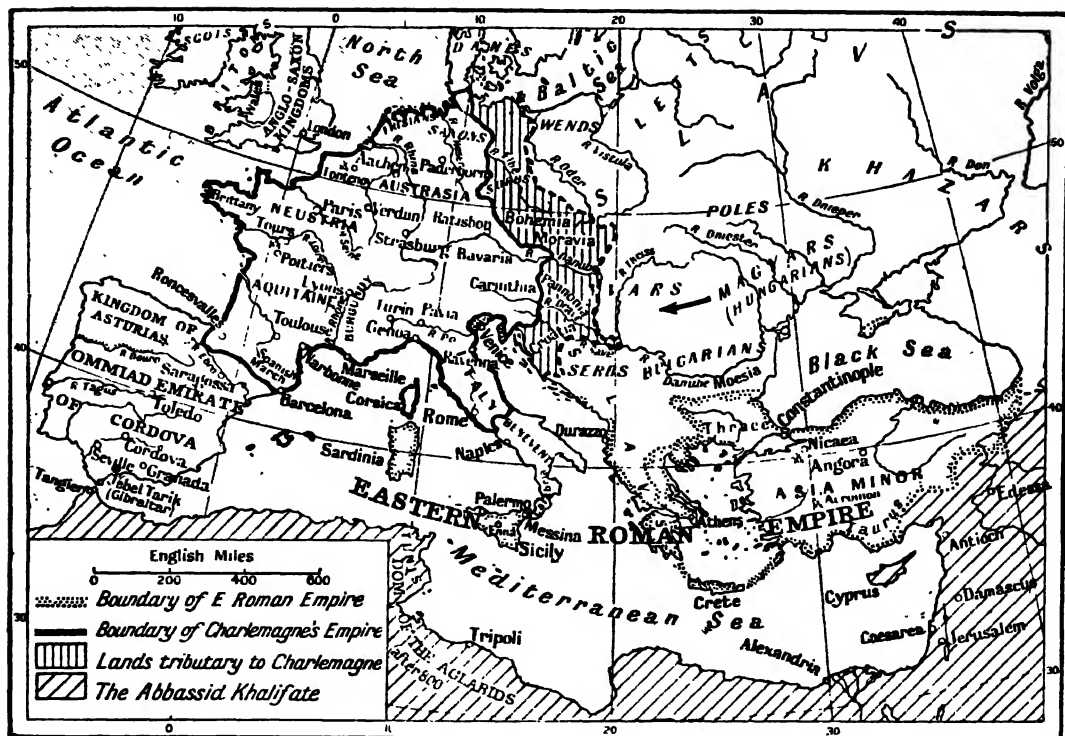
Italy was, in fact, ruled by the Lombards; but it was only in the Lombard Plain that they formed a substantial portion of the population. And the Lombard kings, unless like Liutprand they happened to be men of exceptional ability, could exercise very little control over the Lombard dukes.

In Spain the Visigothic dominion had just been wiped out and its place taken by the Saracens or Moors. The Peninsula had passed under Moslem sway, though a stubborn remnant of Goths and Spaniards in the north-west were even now girding themselves to a struggle which was to be waged for seven and a half centuries.

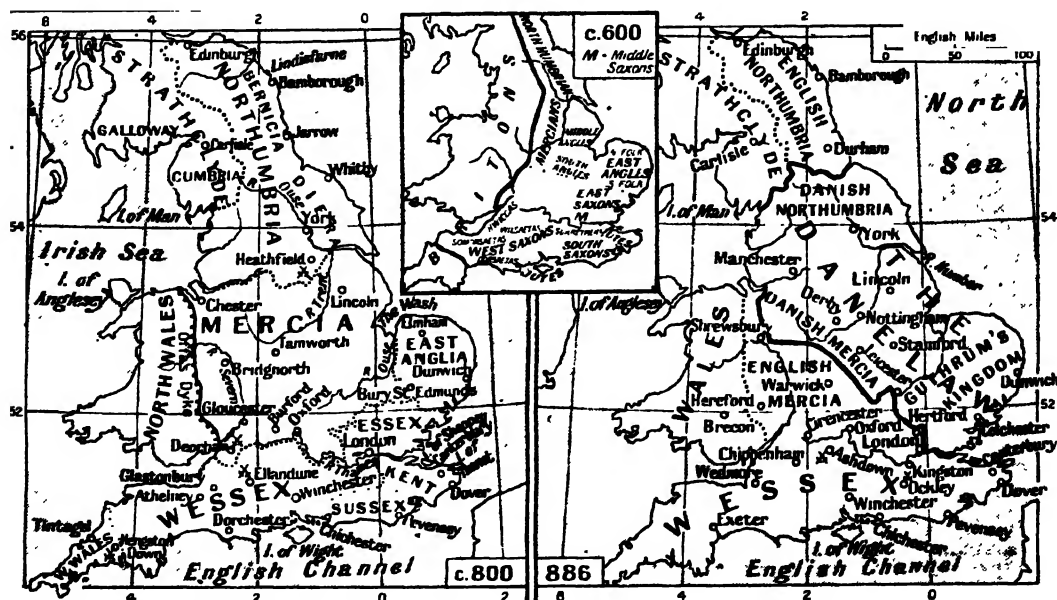
### **Territories under Frank Dominion**

**T**HE rest of what had been the Roman Empire on the European continent, together with much that had never been included therein, was now absorbed in the Frank dominion, of which the eastern limit was not the Rhine but the Elbe, save for the northern Frisian and Saxon districts, still unconquered, between the Weser and the Elbe. The east and the west of the dominion were of different cultures—Teutonic and Gallo-Latin—and were destined to split apart; though between them from the North Sea to the Mediterranean lay a broad mixed belt.

East and north of the German dominion of the Franks, other non-German peoples had come or were coming into ken. The



In the eighth-ninth century the supreme historical event in Europe is the substitution of the Holy Roman for the Eastern Roman Empire as the predominant power; as established by Charlemagne it comprised Gallo-Latin Neustria, Teutonic Austrasia and Lombard Italy. In the Iberian Peninsula the Ommiad emirate was set up by Abd-er-Rahman. In the Near East, Bulgarian and Serbian kingdoms were coming into existence. Islam controlled Africa and western Asia, except Asia Minor.



In England the salient facts are the restriction of the Britons within an ever more limited area in the West, and the transference of supremacy from Northumbria to Mercia and, after 800, to Wessex under Egbert. The period of peace inaugurated by his success was broken by incursions of the Danes resulting, after the treaty of Wedmore in 878, in the establishment of the Danelaw as an independent region. In 886, by the 'peace of Guthrum,' its boundaries were altered in Alfred's favour;

#### STAGES IN THE MAKING OF MODERN EUROPE AND OF ENGLAND

## Emerging of the Nations

Northmen of Denmark, Sweden and Norway were on the point of taking to the sea as piratical rovers, and of repeating the excursions of the Goths towards the Black Sea, overland. Letts and Wends and non-Aryans of Finnish stock occupied the southern and eastern shores of the Baltic, and were pushing southward through the multitudinous Slavonic tribes; the khan of the Avars was still lord of what we now call Hungary. All these peoples were exercising a westward pressure upon the Germans; but east of the Frank dominion there was no community which had attained to such a degree of political organization as would entitle it to be called a state.

### Dynastic Struggles in Islam

**A**T the stage we have now reached in the story of Islam, a crisis was at hand in the Mahomedan world. A century had passed since Mahomet had given to the Arabs an Arab religion, and through that and his own unique personality had given them also an unprecedented unity. That unity was in immediate danger when the Prophet's death necessitated the choice of a successor; Abu Bekr and Omar had, however, preserved it by strenuous effort and by their personal character. Under Othman it was dissolving. Its semblance was restored, but not its substance, under Moawiya, and no more than its semblance was preserved under the dynasty he founded. The Arabs themselves were never in accord in their submission to the Ommiads; and Islam now included vast populations positively hostile to the Ommiad title.

Hisham, the khalif who was reigning in 732, had the skill to play off the discordant elements against each other, postponing the evil day; though before his death in 743 Africa was in revolt, and in Spain the factions were in almost ceaseless conflict. A severance between eastern and western Islam was, in any case, made all but inevitable by geographical conditions; when it did come, it had the curious effect of restoring the Ommiad in the west because he had been dethroned in the east. The stage of the true crisis was in the east.

A year after Hisham's death, his son Walid II was deposed by Yezid ibn Mohalab. Next year Yezid III was removed by Merwan II, acting in the name of Walid's young son. Persia was already in revolt on behalf of the house of Ali. But for years past the crafty brothers of the house of Abbas had been intriguing secretly on the hypothesis that they were the true representatives of the Prophet's family, since in Arab practice the brother succeeded, not the daughter; and it was in the name of the Abbasids that Abu Muslim in 747 revolted in Khorassan and drove out the Ommiad governor. The Abbasids pushed aside the Fatimids; in 750, in a fierce battle on the Zab, they routed the Ommiad army. Merwan escaped to Egypt, where he was killed. Incidentally, the dynastic struggle enabled the Hindus of Sindh permanently to expel their Mahomedan rulers and garrisons.

### Foundation of the Abbasid Dynasty

**A**BDALLAH ABUL-ABBAS, the first khalif of the Abbasid dynasty, which was not extinguished till many centuries had passed, enjoyed a reign of four years (750-754), in which he thoroughly justified the name by which he was popularly—to his own gratification—known, al-Saffah, 'the butcher.' He removed such members of the house of Ali and such of their supporters as seemed likely to be troublesome; by a treacherous device he extirpated the entire Ommiad family, with the exception of one, Abd er-Rahman, who escaped to find his way to the far west after many adventures; and when the adherents of either of the rival houses, the Ommiads or the family of Ali, broke into rebellion, they were repressed with appropriate mercilessness.

The Abbasids owed their throne to Abu Muslim, the governor of Khorassan. When al-Saffah died, his brothers fought each other for the succession. In that contest Mansur owed his success to the decisive intervention of Abu Muslim, who, fanatically devoted to the common cause of the Hashimites, the house of the Prophet, had hesitated between the Abbas and the Ali branches. Abu Muslim was loyal; but the king-maker was distrusted by the

king, and Mansur was no sooner firmly established than Abu Muslim was assassinated. The new khalif was as merciless and as treacherous as his brother had been. He found those qualities useful.

The establishment of the Abbasids meant much more than a mere change of dynasty. The centre of the forces which had effected the dynastic revolution was in the east, and to the east Mansur transferred its political centre. The seat of the Khalifate was removed by him from Damascus to Bagdad, the dominating influence in Asiatic Mahomedanism becoming no longer Arabic but Persian.

## Mansur's Reforms and Achievements

**F**OR two other features of the new order Mansur was personally responsible; the creations of a mercenary bodyguard, and of the wazirate—of troops whose allegiance was directly to the person of the khalif, drawn from sources untouched by Arab factions, and of a minister in complete charge of the details of administration but directly responsible to the khalif. The wazir of a strong khalif was very really his servant; a weak khalif's wazir was not unlikely to be no less really his master.

When Abd er-Rahman escaped from the massacre of the Ommiads, al-Saffah gave the western rebels a leader who could claim to stand for the legitimate line against a usurper. The west had revolted not against Islam, nor against Ommiads or Abbasids in particular, but against the temporal sovereignty of a distant khalif whoever he might be. Abd er-Rahman was able in a short time to rally the rebels to his own standard as no one who had risen as a faction leader could do; two years after Mansur became khalif he was reigning as emir at Cordova (756-787), and declared the political independence of Africa and Spain without as yet assuming a separate religious headship.

When Mansur died in 775 he had consolidated the power of the Bagdad Khalifate; but it was a task which had absorbed all his energies, and there had been no practical extension of dominion. Mansur's brother attempted unsuccessfully to contest the succession with his son Mahdi (775-785), a mild and tolerant

prince; whose reign was nevertheless disturbed by many insurrections, notably that of Mokanna, the 'veiled prophet of Khorassan.' Under the influence of the Persian temperament there was a rapid development of speculative activity in the intellectual and religious fields which was quite alien to the Arab, and sects or schools multiplied correspondingly; at the same time commercial enterprise was greatly stimulated; and Bagdad became a centre of wealth, luxury and intellectual activity far in advance, for a time at least, of any city of the Europeans. Mahdi was followed in 785 by his elder son Hadi, who was assassinated a year later and was succeeded by his younger brother, hero of numberless fascinating fables, in whose day the Khalifate was at its zenith, Haroun al-Raschid (786-809).

## Haroun al-Raschid's glorious Reign

**T**HE court of Haroun, the 'Just' or the 'Orthodox,' was no doubt a brilliant centre of culture and enlightenment, and his title was fairly earned by the general administration, which was left entirely in the hands of the Barmecide family, the famous wazir Jafar and his brothers, to whose father, Yahya, Haroun was largely indebted for the peacefulness of his own accession. The vast wealth at the khalif's disposal made it easy for him to display a lavish and not always discriminating liberality which was highly popular. Haroun, when his will was not crossed or his suspicions aroused, was the incarnation of careless benevolence; but he was equally capable on occasion of cold-blooded cruelty and treachery; as was exemplified in his slaughter of the entire Barmecide family, against whom his mind had become poisoned, in 803.

The temporary disappearance of the wazirate led to a grievous falling off in the administration; and it was doubtless in view of the increasing signs of disruption that Haroun at his death parted his dominion among his sons, while appropriating the Khalifate proper, with its religious supremacy, to the eldest, Emin (809). Already, some years before Haroun's death, Ibrahim ibn Aglabi had established another independent principality ruled by

## Emerging of the Nations

the Aglabid dynasty at Tunis. Even in that reign of splendour the area of the khalif's effective authority was contracted. Haroun made successful campaigns in Asia Minor, but they were no more than raids.

**L**EO III at Constantinople was an administrator of high ability; after 732 he recognized that Italy was out of reach, but in the East he was able to enforce his iconoclastic principles on reluctant Europeans and approving Asiatics; the more because the best of the imperial troops were recruited from his own Anatolian hill-men, who inclined even fanatically to his own way of thinking. Prosperity revived, and prestige was strengthened by a victory, won under his personal command, at Acroinon, over a large invading army which Hisham sent over the Taurus in 739. Two years later he died and was succeeded by his son Constantine V.

opprobriously nicknamed Copronymus by his detractors (741-775).

Constantine's rule was vigorous and active; judged by results it was successful. The prolonged conflicts attending the fall of the Ommiads and the establishment of the Abbasids gave him many opportunities for campaigns in Armenia or beyond the Taurus, by which some territory was recovered. He fortified the passes of the Balkan range, curbing Bulgarian and Serbian aggression; and when Bulgar kings replied by attacks he smote them, and was only prevented from crushing them by a disaster to his fleet and transports for

which not the enemy but the winds and waves were responsible. He cleared the country of the brigands by which it was infested, so that merchants and merchandise travelled in security, to the marked increase of trade.



**EMPRESS IRENE**

Throughout her regency for her son and her own reign (747-803) Irene was an ardent anti-iconoclast. The Empire suffered under her misrule.

*British Museum*



### SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA WHICH RESTORED IMAGE WORSHIP

Consequences disastrous to the peaceful government of the Eastern Empire attended the controversy that raged in the eighth century concerning the worship of images. The Council of Constantinople definitely forbade image worship, but in 787 Irene, while regent during the minority of her son Constantine VI, adopted the opposite policy and summoned the Council of Nicaea, represented in this drawing from a ninth century Greek Testament, which reversed the decisions of the earlier one.





NICEPHORUS I AND MICHAEL I

By a coup d'état in 802 Nicephorus (left) secured the removal of the empress Irene and reigned until 811, when he was succeeded by his son-in-law, Michael Rhangabe. The latter was an undistinguished, ineffective ruler.

*British Museum*

But he left an ill name and an ugly nickname because where his father had been a puritan he was a zealot. Not satisfied with imposing public conformity, he searched out and penalised those who continued to practise 'image worship' in private, instituted a harsh religious persecution, basing it on the decisions of a general council at Constantinople (753) which was repudiated before its session began by the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria as well as by the entire Church in the West, and then embarked on a campaign against monks and monasticism which was shocking to all but the extremists of his own party.

The same policy, though with a degree less of brutality and intolerance, was pursued by his son Leo IV (775-780), who also in the course of his brief reign fought two successful campaigns with the khalif Mahdi. But when he died, leaving a ten-year-old son, Constantine VI, the power passed into the hands of his widow, the empress Irene, an ambitious woman who had hitherto concealed the fact that she was herself a zealous 'iconodule.'

For ten years the dowager empress reigned in her son's name. Beginning by relaxing the measures against image worshippers, she went on to dismiss iconoclast officials civil and ecclesiastic, and to set iconodules in their places. She called a fresh council, which in effect reversed the decrees of the last. A plot was formed against her in favour of one of the late emperor's brothers, but it was discovered, and its only effect was that all the young emperor's uncles were

forced to enter religion. The imperial guard mutinied, but was suppressed.

But while Irene was carrying through her reversal of ecclesiastical policy the Slavs broke out in Thrace and the khalif's armies raided Asia Minor from end to end with impunity, so that they had to be ignominiously bought off. So in 790 Constantine, chafing at being still kept in tutelage, effected a coup d'état, took the reins into his own hands, and began to display signs of salutary vigour. But he again allowed his mother a freedom and a degree of authority of which she took advantage to effect another coup d'état on her own account (797), seize her son, depose him, put out his eyes, shut him up in a monastery and—a thing for which there was no precedent—herself assume the imperial diadem.

**F**OR five unhappy years (797-802) Irene was empress, presumably because there was no one ready to take upon himself the risk and responsibility of deposing her. They were years of disaster, for Haroun's raiders, checked for a time by Constantine, again overran Asia Minor and again had to be bought off by the promise of a heavy tribute. The domestic government was in the hands of pernicious favourites whose scandalous misrule was diversified only by the scandal of their private differences. The situation was so intolerable that in 802 the treasurer, Nicephorus, effected yet another coup d'état; Irene was seized in the middle of the night, carried off to a convent and forced to take the veil; and without further disturbance Nicephorus (802-811) was accepted as emperor.

The new emperor enjoyed no personal prestige; he was known only as a competent treasury official. But recent years had brought to the front no man of distinguished talent, and the undistinguished but ambitious persons who tried to supplant him were easily suppressed. He took the always unpopular but highly commendable course of maintaining a resolute neutrality between iconodule and iconoclast; and, though no soldier, he did his best to restore the efficiency of the army. But he failed to free himself from the tribute to Haroun, and he fell in a

## Emerging of the Nations

Bulgarian campaign, when the succession was secured by the incompetent Michael Rhangabe, his Greek son-in-law—the first of that race to wear the diadem.

### Frank Empire under Charles Martel

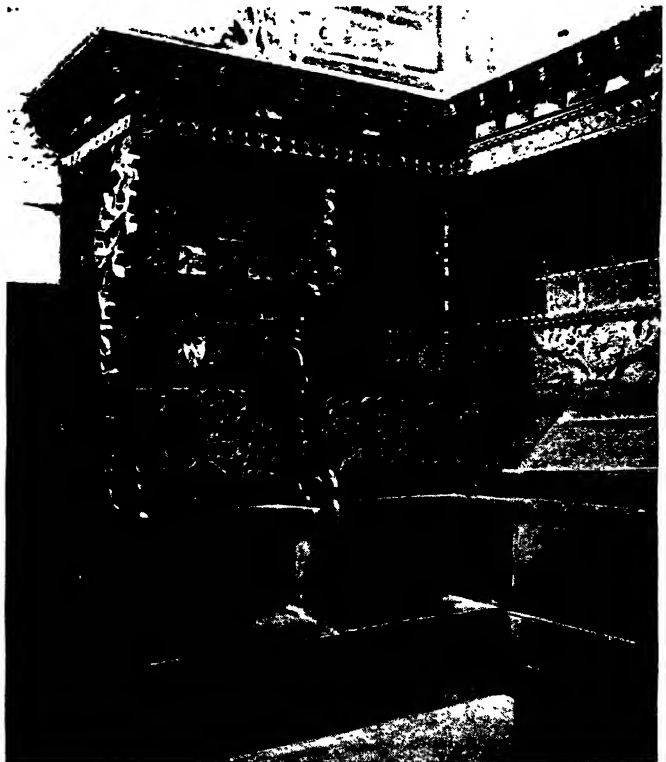
**T**HE Frank empire, though without an official emperor, dominated the entire west of Europe. Charles Martel ruled the Franks for nine years after his triumph at Poitiers. In the course of them the shadow-king Thendebert died. Charles neither found a shadow-heir for him nor himself assumed the crown; but he went on ruling as mayor of a non-existent palace or as 'duke' of the Franks. The Moors made incursions from Spain and excursions from Narbonne, which they still held; he fought them and beat them and penned them into a narrow area, though it was not till he was dead that they were finally cleared out and driven for ever beyond the Pyrenees. Aquitaine under Eudo's son Hunold was still semi-independent; the Saxons on the north-east required chastisement, and the outlying provinces were restive; but everywhere Charles left no room for doubt that he was master.

Boniface, now archbishop with several German bishoprics under him, was his vigorous friend and ally; though the clergy complained bitterly of Charles' enforcement on them of due contributions to the coffers and to the military levies of the state. But in contrast to the Eastern emperors, he did not concern himself with properly ecclesiastical matters. He maintained friendly relations with both Liutprand and Gregory III in Italy, and when the pope chose to quarrel with the Lombard he declined to intervene in his favour.

In 741 Charles, though uncrowned, was undoubtedly the most powerful of living potentates, the equal at least of Leo

at Constantinople (who died in the same year), while the Ommiad dynasty was tottering. When he died, the Franks accepted the authority of his two legitimate sons, Pepin the Short and Carloman, as mayors of Neustria and Austrasia respectively. Pepin (741-768) ruled jointly and in perfect harmony with his brother till the latter elected to retire from the world to the religious life in 747. For four years he ruled alone as mayor, with the puppet Meroving king Childeric, whom he and Carloman had routed out and set on the throne in order to regularise their own position in 742. In 751, with universal approval and the express warrant of the pope Zacharias, he invited the acquiescent dummy to enter religion, and was himself crowned king of the Franks.

For seventeen years Pepin was consolidating and extending his power. Within the dominion he established his



**CARVEN STALLS OF LOMBARD KINGS**

Cividale del Friuli is rich in relics of the early Lombard kings, who were a constant menace to the Papacy—for example, these royal stalls in the cathedral. The final outcome of the quarrel between Liutprand (712-43) and Pope Gregory III was the absorption of the Lombard kingdom into the Frank monarchy.



FOUNDER OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

Wearing the long mantle of the Franks and the royal crown, and bearing in one hand the sword and in the other the orb, this statue represents one of the Carolingian monarchs, most probably Charlemagne. As Frankish king and Roman Emperor he dominated Europe for more than forty years.

*Musée Carnavalet; photo, Archives photographiques*

authority over recalcitrant nobles and tribes, not without trouble; punitive expeditions compelled the Saxons on the north-east to pay tribute; he cleared the Moors out of Narbonne and drove the last of them across the Pyrenees; and he did what no Frankish ruler had done before him—he made himself the arbiter of Italy by taking the field as the protector of the Papacy; which no doubt was precisely what Zacharias desired when he commended Pepin to assume the crown.

Liutprand had quarrelled with Gregory, as we saw, and Charles had declined to intervene in arms on Gregory's behalf. But he imposed no harsh terms on Gregory's successor; and Hildebrand and

Ratchis, who followed him as kings of the Lombards, were at peace with the Papacy. But their reigns were brief. In 749 Ratchis entered religion, and his brother Aistulf again developed the spirit of active aggression. He finally ejected the imperial exarch from Ravenna, and then revealed his intention of reducing the Papacy to vassalage in respect of its temporal estates. The menace was much more real than it had ever been in the days of Liutprand, who never desired to deprive the pope of at least technical independence, in spite of the provocative attitude which Gregory III had so frequently chosen to adopt towards him. In the circumstances, for the image-worshipping pope to appeal to the iconoclastic fanatic at Constantinople would have been absurd; and in 753 Pope Stephen, the successor of Zacharias, turned to a loyal son of the Church whom his predecessor had placed under an obligation, the newly-crowned king of the Franks.

Pepin responded handsomely. A campaign in 754 quickly reduced Aistulf to sue for terms. He did homage

to Pepin as overlord, and promised to restore the cities he had seized. Pepin withdrew to avenge on the Frisians the martyrdom of Boniface, which had just taken place. Aistulf neglected to fulfil his promises, and in 755 marched on Rome. This brought down Pepin on him again; and this time he was forced to hand over to the pope practically the whole of what had been the exarchate of Ravenna and thenceforth became the States of the Church. When Aistulf died, the new king of the Lombards, Desiderius, did not again challenge the old king of the Franks.

Charles Martel had, as a matter of course, left his realm divided between his two sons; so also did Pepin, on his death

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in 768, in accordance with the immemorial custom of the Frank monarchy. Between those two, Charles and Carloman, there was no love lost. Civil war would almost certainly have rent the double kingdom, as in Merovingian days, if Carloman had not died in 771, leaving his elder brother king of all the Franks, not three years after the joint accession. The whole reign of Charles covered forty-six years (768-814); for the last fourteen of them he was not merely king of the Franks but Roman Emperor of the West. In those years he changed the basis of the whole European system by the double process of conquest and organization.

### Charlemagne begins his Victorious Reign

**I**T is unnecessary to devote a great amount of space to the process of conquest. Aquitaine had made its last futile effort to break away before Carloman was dead. In 772 Charles, now sole king of the Franks, made his first move towards the subjection of Saxony, which gave him constant occupation for thirteen years and at intervals for nineteen years more. He had already imposed on the Saxons generally a formal submission when a quarrel between Pope Hadrian and the Lombard king Desiderius as to the right to certain cities provided him with an excuse for interfering in Italy in answer to the pope's personal appeal.

Charles crossed the Alps, not as an arbiter but actually as a partisan, for the elements of a serious quarrel with Desiderius were already there; since the Frank had married the Lombard's daughter and then repudiated her within the year, and the Lombard was giving asylum to the widow of Carloman and his young son. Charles ordered Desiderius to hand over the cities which the pope claimed as being part of the Ravenna exarchate; Desiderius was defiant. In 773 Charles descended on Lombardy, shut Desiderius up in Pavia, and starved him into surrender next year, when he was sent to pass the rest of his life in a monastery. Instead of setting up a new Lombard vassal-king, Charles proclaimed himself king of the Franks and Lombards. The Lombard kingdom survived, but as an appanage of

the Frank crown. The duchy of Benevento, however, succeeded in maintaining practical independence.

Meanwhile Saxony revolted. A great campaign compelled it to temporary submission. Lombard dukes revolted, and required to be brought to book; whereon Saxony again rushed to arms, in vain. In 777 Charles celebrated the incorporation of Saxony at a great diet held at Paderborn.

In 778 Charles invaded Spain, invited thither by Moors who were defying Abd er-Rahman at Cordova. He got temporary possession of Barcelona, but failed to capture Saragossa, and when he retired through the Pyrenees his rear-guard was cut up in the pass of Roncesvalles. There fell the valiant captain Roland, of whom practically nothing else is historically known, though he became the foremost figure in the later traditions which gathered about the Paladins of Charlemagne.

### Saxons submit to Frank Supremacy

**H**E returned to Aquitaine to learn that the Saxons were up in arms again. By 780 he had them once more in apparent subjection. They were Christianised in thousands by baptism, and their Christianity was emphasised by merciless punishment for lapses. In despair they blazed out again in 782. As always when Charles appeared in person, they were crushed into submission; they surrendered more than four thousand persons of rank who had incited them to rebellion; and the prisoners were slaughtered in cold blood. Thereupon the whole Saxon folk flung themselves into a life-and-death struggle, the end of which was a foregone conclusion. In 785 Witikind, their most indomitable leader, came in upon promise of his life. Though there were sporadic insurrections for nearly twenty years more, this was the last great struggle against the Frank supremacy.

Meanwhile, the ineffectiveness of the Spanish raid in 778 had been demonstrated. The Moors had reverted to their allegiance to Abd er-Rahman. In 785 began the long Spanish war, the conduct of which was entrusted to the king's third



#### SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL POWER

On Christmas Day in the year 800 Charlemagne was crowned in S. Peter's by Pope Leo III and proclaimed Emperor of the Romans. The momentous event is alluded to in this mosaic depicting pope and emperor at S. Peter's feet.

*Piazza S. Giovanni, Rome; photo, Anderson*

son, whom later ages know as Louis the Pious or the Debonnaire, with William of Toulouse to guide him. The task fell upon Louis, because Charlemagne had made him viceroy with the royal title in Aquitaine. The second son, Pepin, held a similar position in Lombardy, and the eldest, Charles, in Neustria north of Aquitaine. The conquest of Catalonia was a gradual process; but by 812 the third Cordovan emir, el-Hakim, was driven to a formal cession of the territory between the Pyrenees and the Ebro, which the Saracens evacuated completely.

Beyond the Elbe and the German borderland, Charles was able, with very little fighting, to impose allegiance, obedience and tribute on the Slavonic tribes, who also embraced Christianity with no apparent reluctance; the more northern group by a campaign in 789, the Bohemians in 806. The Mongolian Avars from Hungary and Pannonia chose to raid into Bavaria, and the north-eastern corner of Italy which was a part of the Lombard kingdom in 788. After one successful campaign in 790, from which he was

recalled by an insurrection in Saxony, Charles left the subjugation of the Avars to his son Pepin. A vast spoil, accumulated in the days of their past power, was taken; and in 805 they were reduced to making complete submission. They were left a cowed and tributary nation under a vassal khan or chagan of their own race; such power as remained to them vanished somewhat later under the onslaught of the Magyars.

The conquests of Charlemagne, however, did not reach the Danes and Northmen, of whom we hear first in his reign. Their exploits are the subject of a special chapter (Chap. 96). The menace of the conqueror's approach in Saxony alarmed Godred, the king of Jutland; he gave harborage to the Saxon Witikind, fortified the neck of the peninsula from the Baltic to the North Sea against attack by land, having no qualms about his security by sea, and, feeling himself satisfactorily out of reach, began in 808 to harry the Frisian coast and the southern shores of the Baltic, almost with impunity, for two years. Doubtless he would have felt the full weight of Charlemagne's hand had he not been slain by his own folk in 810, when his successor hastened to make peace. But the era of the Vikings had opened. The long-ships of the northern rovers had already found their piratical way to the coasts of England, of Ireland and of Aquitaine, though they were no subjects of Godred or any other overlord, but free war-chiefs.

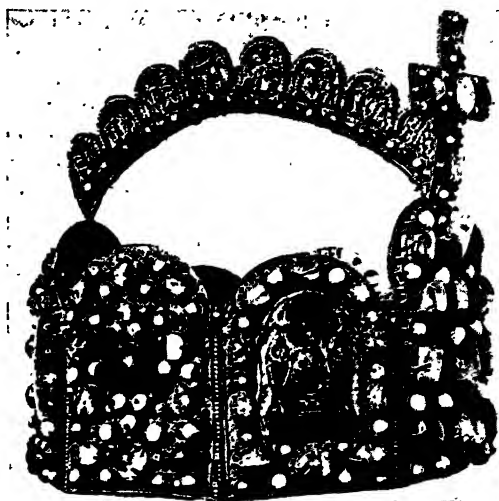
#### Creation of the Holy Roman Empire

It was not, however, simply as king of the Franks, or of the Franks and Lombards, that Charles the Great carried through the conquests of his later years; or as Roman Patrician, a title he had claimed, like Odoacer three centuries before him, when he annexed the Lombard crown. In 800 Pope Leo III fled from the bitter enemies in Rome who had proved too strong for him to Charlemagne in Saxony. Charles sent him back to Rome with an escort that none durst challenge, and himself followed late in the year, to inquire into the charges that had been levelled by or against the pope.

## Emerging of the Nations

The result of the investigation was a complete vindication for Leo and the utter condemnation of his enemies. On Christmas day, at the conclusion of the service held in S. Peter's to celebrate the holy day, as the unconscious king knelt before the high altar, Leo, moved, as he declared, by a sudden inspiration, set a crown upon his head, and proclaimed him Augustus, Emperor of the Romans, crowned by God. The words were taken up with a universal shout. The Holy Roman Empire had sprung into being.

The character of Charlemagne's empire, for which he was responsible only in so far as he had extended its borders, and its organization, which was derived from the past but shaped by his genius, determined the medieval system or feudal monarchy. As Pepin the Short left the Frankish kingdom, it was in form an absolute monarchy. The king was aided by a council, the men on whom he chose to rely, for the most part lay or ecclesiastical governors of the districts into which the



**REPUTED CROWN OF CHARLEMAGNE**

This imperial crown, preserved at Vienna, is composed of eight plates of gold, four embellished with enameled figures and four studded with jewels. From a jewelled cross in front an arch extends to the hindermost plaque.

great dominion was divided for administrative purposes—dukes, counts, margraves of the marches or border districts, bishops, abbots. Occasionally, when some matter of supreme national concern was on hand, such as the change of dynasty which made Pepin king of the Franks, a general assembly was held to ensure the general approbation.

The counts and dukes were appointed or removed at the king's will; but, as a matter of course, they were men of great estates which they enjoyed by hereditary right, so that in practice their official rank tended also to become hereditary, and to be claimed as of right. Especially this was the case in the outlying regions which had only recently ceased to be practically independent; but such magnates were always liable to be dispossessed at the king's will, as in the case of the dukes of Aquitaine and Swabia. At the same time, by immemorial



**LOUIS LE DEBONNAIRE : A WEAKLING EMPEROR**

Charlemagne was succeeded in 812 by his only surviving son, Louis. His sobriquets 'the Debonnaire' and 'the Pious' indicate the weakness of character that brought nothing but trouble upon the Empire. This miniature portrays him in Roman 'chlamys' and wearing the closed Byzantine crown.

*From a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale*

## Chronicle XVI. 732-867

Frank tradition, hereditary right descended not by primogeniture but by partition among the sons.

The germs of the later struggle between Papacy and Empire lay in the method of Charlemagne's coronation, though probably the possibility of it never entered his mind. As the champion of justice, he had used his power to reinstate Leo at Rome ; the pope had merely given expression to universal sentiment in the West when he took upon himself almost to force on his

champion, the actual master of the West, the assumption of the title and authority of Roman Emperor. That did not give the pope an authority over him, which no pope had ever claimed over any Roman Emperor.

Nevertheless, it proved possible for later popes to claim that the spiritual head of Christendom had the right of conferring, and had in actual fact conferred the imperial authority upon the emperor of his choice. Neither before nor after



### CAROLINGIAN JEWEL OF THE NINTH CENTURY : THE 'CRYSTAL OF LOTHAIR'

This remarkable crystal disk, engraved with episodes from the story of Susanna, may have been intended for the morse or clasp of a cope. The inscription over the central medallion records its having been made to the order of Lothair, King of the Franks, probably, therefore, the son of the emperor Lothair, and from 855 to 869 king of the district later known as Lorraine. After being in the possession of the Abbey of Waulsort on the Meuse for eight hundred years it disappeared, but was recovered from the bed of the Meuse in the nineteenth century

*Bernal Collection, British Museum*



## Emerging of the Nations

his coronation did Charles ever hesitate to interfere and dictate in matters ecclesiastical as seemed to him good; he recognized that as emperor he had assumed even higher responsibilities than as king of the Franks; but he never dreamed of regarding himself as responsible to the pope, though he regarded the pope as having become responsible to him, as he had not been to the king of the Franks. While Charles lived no one would have ventured to hint at the possibility of such a question being raised.

The great emperor died at Aachen, his favourite residence, in 814, the seventy-second year of his life and the forty-sixth of his reign. He was succeeded by his only surviving son, Louis, though his grandson Bernard the son of Pepin was already reigning with the royal title in Lombardy. Louis had shown a reasonable competence in his vice-royalty of Aquitaine and the Spanish march, but he was completely unfitted for the higher responsibilities that were now laid upon him. The most blameless and humble-minded of men, he was altogether in the hands of a scheming wife and of the priests whom his piety taught him to trust implicitly.

### Disastrous Weaknesses of Louis

THE results were disastrous. He sanctioned rather than committed the one conscious crime of his life when he put to death his nephew Bernard, who had come to him under a safe-conduct after taking up arms on learning that he was to be deprived of his Lombard kingdom; and he was haunted for the rest of his life by this sin, for which he repented literally in sackcloth. But his morbid conscience caused him to repent with equal fervour the pettiest of peccadilloes. He dismissed his father's able ministers, who fell short of his moral standards, and reposed his undiscerning confidence only where it was utterly misplaced. He was a fond and foolishly forgiving father to sons who repaid him with brutal humiliations; and he reserved his warmest affections for the child of his second marriage, so that his many projects on the boy's behalf ended by shattering the loyalty of his most loyal supporters.



CHARLES THE BALD

Tunic and chlamys of Roman fashion were items of Carolingian costume as shown in the Bible of Charles the Bald and other illuminated books of the period. Military dress (see p. 2432) resembled that of the Roman Praetorian Guard.

*Bibliothèque Nationale*

Louis began by crowning himself with his own hands, and was then feeble enough to submit dutifully to re-coronation at the hands of a new pope who had been elected without the imperial sanction. Then in accordance with precedent he provided his three sons with kingdoms; for the eldest, Lothair, whom he associated with himself as emperor, Lombardy; for Pepin, Aquitaine; for Lewis, known in consequence as 'the German,' Bavaria and the eastern marches. Lothair was also to succeed to the rest. The partition led directly to the revolt and death of his nephew Bernard; the actual penalty imposed on the rebel was not death but blinding, but the bungling infliction of it killed him.

Then the emperor's wife died, and very much against his own will he married again. In 822, most unfortunately, was born to him the son known as Charles the Bald, whence sprang endless troubles. For the doting father was bent on providing the youngest son with a kingdom, which could only be done at the expense

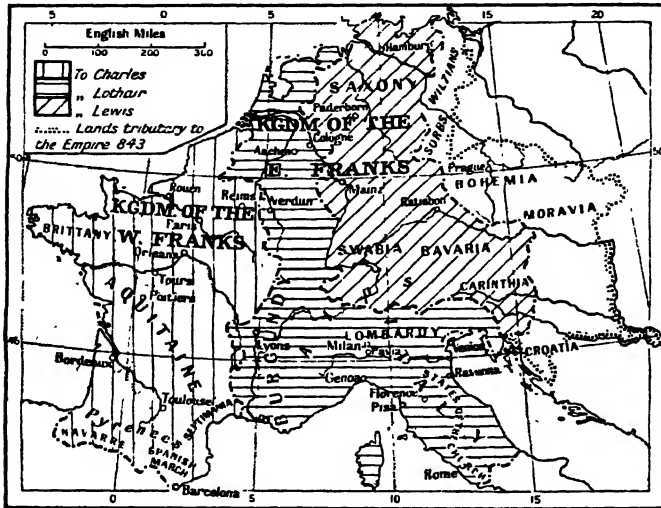
of one or more of his half-brothers, none of whom would listen to any such scheme.

Degrading public exhibitions of penitential self-humiliation dictated by a morbid conscience only convinced men that the pious devotee was quite unfit for his imperial responsibilities. Every proposed partition for the provision of a kingdom for the child Charles produced a revolt of his brothers and a humiliating compromise, followed after an interval by a fresh partition and a fresh revolt. In

three surviving brothers ; Lothair had for once taken sides with his father and his youngest brother. He was now emperor, and immediately drove the still youthful Charles into the arms of Lewis, though he succeeded in attaching Pepin to his own side. The crash of conflict came next year when Lothair was decisively beaten at the bloody battle of Fontenay. Lewis and Charles made a solemn compact, which they actually kept—the Oath of Strasburg, still more notable because they took it in

two languages, the German of the east and the Roman which was on the way to become French of the west. The immediate outcome was the treaty of Verdun (843).

By the Partition of Verdun the unlatinised German east went to Lewis, the thoroughly Latin Neustria and Aquitaine (the greater part of modern France) to Charles, Italy and the whole wide intervening belt of territory from the Rhône basin to the Belgian coast to the emperor Lothair, including the original Austrasia, Burgundy and Provence, where Latin and German were not so much blended as inextricably entangled. And in this middle kingdom lay both the Frank



**THE PARTITION OF VERDUN**

By the Treaty of Verdun, made in 843 by the three sons of Louis I. Germany east of the Rhine went to Lewis, Neustria and Aquitaine to Charles the Bald, and the buffer territory between, together with Lombard Italy, to Lothair. France and Germany then for the first time came definitely into being.

the first of these civil wars Louis found himself with the rebels at his mercy, and forgave them without taking any security against a repetition of the offence. In the second, when the odds were all in his favour, he chose to negotiate ; the negotiations were prolonged while the princes sowed treason among his followers, till the unhappy father found himself deserted and helpless—men called the scene of this shameful performance Lügenfeld, the 'field of lies' (833). Louis was deposed ; but his outrageous treatment brought reaction, and he was restored.

Fresh partitions only brought fresh revolts. The last of them was collapsing when Louis died in 840. On this occasion the rebels were Lewis the German and Pepin of Aquitaine, the nephew of the

capital, Aachen, and the capital of the Empire, Rome. The brothers ignored the nephew in Aquitaine, who remained a thorn in the side of Charles, whose kingdom was not yet known as France.

For ten years the brothers kept the peace with each other. Then Charles and Lewis started fighting, Lewis sending support to an insurrection in Aquitaine. In 855 Lothair died and was succeeded by his son the emperor Lewis II, whom he had already made king of Lombardy. But Lewis was fully occupied with the defence of Italy against the Mediterranean power of the Saracens ; his brother Lothair took possession of the northern division of his kingdom beyond the Alps, whence it received the name of Lotharingia (Lorraine), the southern half going to his other

## Emerging of the Nations

brother, Charles. The rising in Aquitaine collapsed ; but there ensued a chaos of struggles between brothers, uncles, sons and fathers to snatch territory from each other which it is not worth while to disentangle. (See genealogy in page 2495.)

And meanwhile, from the beginning of the civil wars in 829, the Northmen, in ever-increasing numbers had been taking advantage of the eternal discord to raid the coasts and sail or row up the rivers, looting or sacking the defenceless towns, and even for a time occupying Bordeaux, though their normal custom was to sail off with their spoils.

**E**NGLAND, meanwhile, was making progress towards unification. In the middle of the eighth century the pre-eminence of Northumbria, apart from her monasteries, her Bedes and her Alcuins, was on the wane ; the political ascendancy passed to Mercia under the rule of Offa, who compelled most of the other kings to recognize his overlordship, and curbed Welsh raiders by constructing Offa's dyke. Charlemagne had learnt from his fathers to respect England as the nursery of Willibrord and Boniface, as well as of his own friend Alcuin ; and, having no cause to quarrel with Offa, treated with him as a potentate of the first rank.

It was to the court of Charlemagne that young Egbert of Kent betook himself when he failed to secure the succession in Wessex to which he had some claim ; and doubtless it was there that he learnt much of the kingcraft of which he made good use when he returned to Wessex unopposed in



COINS OF OFFA AND OF EGBERT

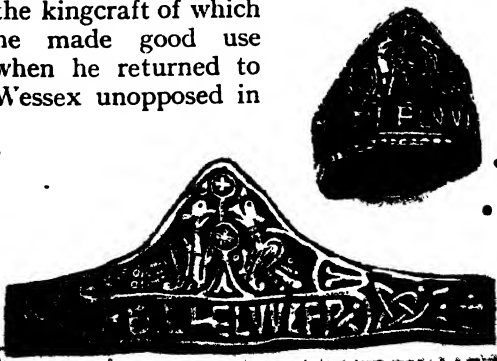
From Northumbria predominance in England passed to Mercia under Offa (left), who ruled that kingdom from 757 to 796. Mercia in turn yielded to Wessex under Egbert (right), who secured the throne in 802 and conquered Mercia in 829.

*British Museum*

802. He was a wise man who knew how to bide his time. It came in 825 when he broke the Mercian power at Ellandune. By 829 every kingdom south of the Humber—for the most part willingly—had acknowledged him as Bretwalda, high king of the English ; and from his time dates the claim of the Wessex house of Cerdic to be the royal house of England even to the present day.

Vikings from Norway had already made for themselves a permanent footing in Ireland, but only an occasional raid visited the English coast while Egbert lived. When raiders did come he dealt with them effectively. On his death in 839 the whole land was at peace, and the accession of his pious but not very competent son Ethelwulf was accepted without demur. He was a devoted son of the Church, on which he lavished so much of the crown estates that a mistaken tradition has attributed to him the institution of tithes. The defence of the country against the now multiplying attacks of the Danes was mainly the work of the fighting bishop of Sherborne, Eahlstan. They suffered a great defeat at Aclea (Ockley ?) in 851 ; nevertheless, either in that year or in 855 they wintered for the first time in the Isle of Thanet or of Sheppey, though for some time their further activities were suspended. The great struggle began in the reign of Ethelwulf's second son, Ethelbert, 860-866, and lasted through the reigns of two more brothers in succession, Ethelred and Alfred the Great.

In the far north also unification was brought nearer when in 844 the two Celtic



KING ETHELWULF'S GOLD RING

Son of Egbert and father of King Alfred the Great, Ethelwulf was king of Wessex 839-58. His noted piety is indicated by the early Christian design of two peacocks above the inscription *Ethelvvlf Rex* on his ring, found at Laverstock.

*British Museum*

## Chronicle XVI. 732-867

kingdoms of the Picts and the Scots were joined because the young king of Scots, Kenneth McAipine, was also unexpectedly left the legitimate heir of the Pictish crown under the Pict law of succession.

### Dissensions in Empire and Khalifate

**A**T Constantinople, Nicephorus, as we have seen, was succeeded by the incapable Michael Rhangabe, who in 812 acknowledged the new Roman emperor of the West. Not his crimes but his incapacity led to his deposition in 813 by the soldier Leo V, 'the Armenian.' Leo's six years of rule did much to counteract the unhappy effects of Irene's reign, which that of Nicephorus had only in a small degree remedied; and the Bulgars were firmly checked. More still would have been done if the emperor had been able to keep clear of the iconoclastic controversy, in which, like most soldiers, he was on the otherwise unpopular side of the iconoclasts. But, having thus made himself unpopular, he was assassinated in 820. The accession of another soldier, Michael II, 'the Amorian,' nicknamed the Stammerer, was attended by outbreaks of rebellion, and his nine years' reign was mainly memorable for the capture of Crete and the invasion of Sicily (attached to the Eastern, not the Western, Empire) by the Saracen fleets. Two years after the accession of his son Theophilus (829-842) war was renewed for thirty years between the Empire and the Khalifate.

The reign of Haroun, for all its picturesque splendours, its development of material wealth and its intellectual activities, did not in fact mean that the Khalifate was growing in strength. Even before his death in 809 the Aglabid dynasty had established its independence at Tunis. The Saracen fleets that dominated the Mediterranean were not his fleets; they issued from the ports of Africa or Spain. He left his empire divided between three sons, who were soon fighting for supremacy; in 813 the eldest, Emin, was killed, and the second, Mamun, became khalif (813-833).

Heresies and orthodoxies shaped political parties in the Mahomedan as in the Byzantine Empire, and the domestic dis-

tractions in both prevented each from attacking the other till the end of Mamun's reign, when Theophilus had already succeeded Michael the Amorian at Constantinople. It was the Corsairs that reft Crete from Michael; it was the Aglabids that overran Sicily; it was both Corsairs and Aglabids that were soon threatening Italy itself, like the Vandals in the fifth century.

### Sicily overrun by the Saracens

**T**HE Aglabids were incited to their invasion of Sicily by the traitor Euphemius, a disgraced official who hoped by their aid to be made master of the island. From 827 to 831 successes and defeats alternated; but in that year Mamun invaded Cappadocia, and Theophilus was forced to concentrate all his military efforts on the war with the Khalifate—a war in which it proved, in thirty years of fighting, that neither side could gain any permanent advantage over the other. Theophilus had provoked the attack by harbouring refugees from the khalif's religious persecution. The consequence was that he could no longer send aid to his Sicilian subjects, and, in spite of a prolonged and stubborn defence, the Saracen conquest of Sicily was practically completed with the fall of Enna in 859. Command of the Strait had already been won in 842 by the capture of Messina.

Before Messina fell the Saracens were in Italy. No king of the Lombards, whether Lombard or Frank, except Liutprand, had succeeded in bringing the Lombard dukes of Benevento under control; least of all Lothair, who was always preoccupied by quarrels with his father or his brothers. Naples and Calabria were still in the Byzantine allegiance. In 840 rivals were fighting for the Benevento dukedom. One invited help from the conquering Saracens in Sicily, the other from the Corsairs of Crete. As a matter of course, the Saracens turned the position to their own account, fought for their own hand in collusion with each other, and were very soon overrunning and more or less garrisoning all South Italy.

The saviours of Italy were Lewis the son of Lothair and Pope Leo IV. Lewis

## Emerging of the Nations

was made king of Italy and emperor designate in 845, following the Verdun partition; incidentally, on the election of Pope Leo in 847, he reasserted the imperial claim to confirm it. In 849 a great Saracen fleet was completely shattered, partly by storms and partly by the fleet which Leo had made ready, and Rome was delivered from the menace which had threatened her. Lewis imposed a reconciliation and a partition of the duchy of Benevento on the rival dukes, and then devoted himself whole-heartedly to the struggle with the Corsair chief Mofareg, who was well on the way to establishing his own supremacy in the south. Though Lewis became emperor in 855, his pre-occupation with Italy never allowed him to intervene in the dynastic quarrels which racked the rest of the Empire.

In the east Theophilus fought with Mamun and Mamun's successor Mutassem (833-841) with varying success. On his death in 842 the government passed into the hands of a council of regency on behalf of his infant son, afterwards unhappily known as Michael the Drunkard (842-867). A feeble government at Bagdad, a feeble government at Constantinople, and generals usually inefficient on both sides, kept the war dragging on indecisively.

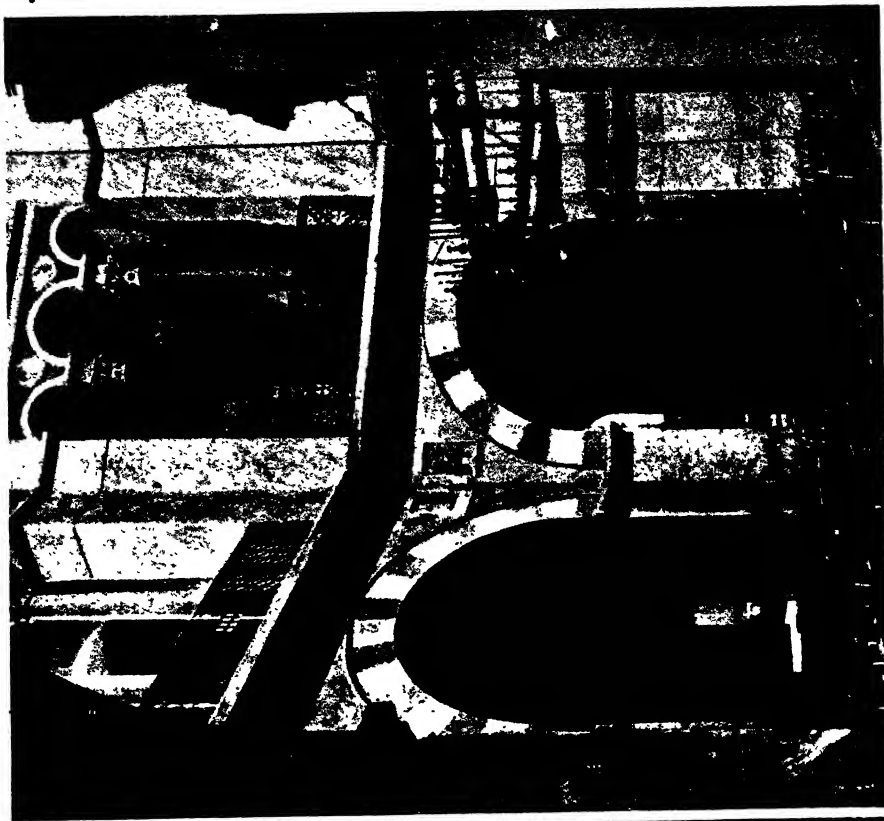
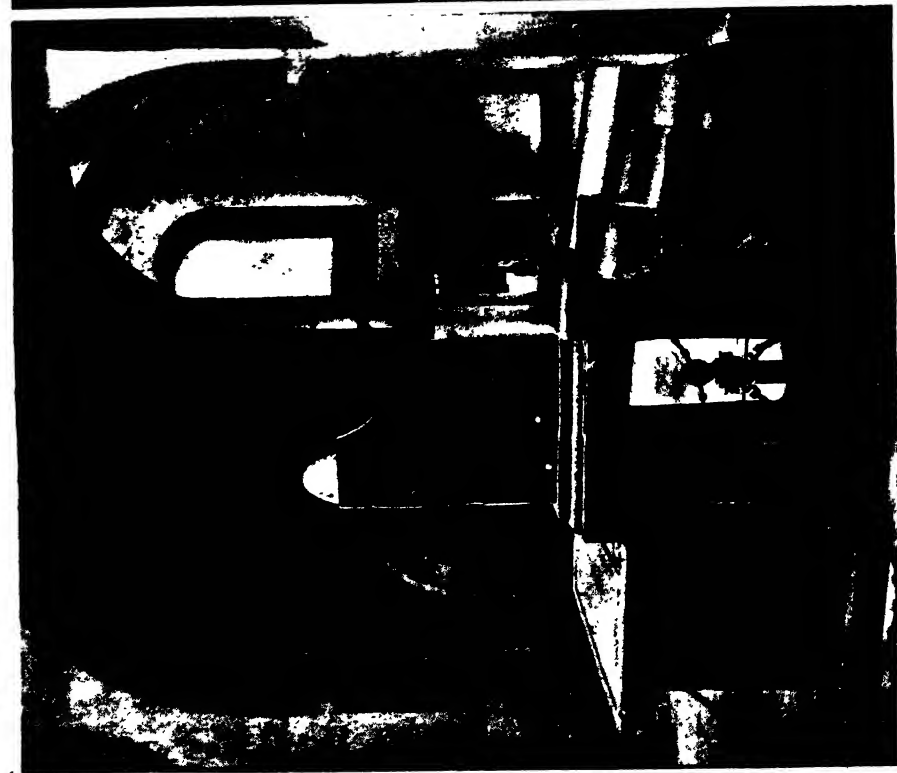
### **Warring of the Abbasid Dynasty**

**A**t Bagdad the Abbasid Khalifate was by this time markedly on the downward path. Mamun had in a high degree both the faults and the merits which distinguished his house, and was no unworthy successor to Haroun. But periods of great intellectual activity are apt to have a disintegrating side, and the antagonisms between old beliefs and novel speculations multiplied political dissensions. The uneasiness of the khalif's position was manifested by the necessity under which Mutassem found himself of large increases in the army of mercenaries, while provincial governors, especially in Khorassan, were year by year growing more independent. Wathek (824-847) and Mutawakkil (847-861), the successors of Mutassem, were men of little capacity and less character, and the way was being made ready for disruption.

At Constantinople the regency was directed by the young mother of the infant emperor, who was only four years old in 842. Theodora, the empress-dowager, was a fervent image worshipper for whom the religious question dominated all others. she reversed her husband's policy and persecuted the iconoclasts. Administration generally went to pieces. At eighteen, Michael in 856 set his mother aside and ruled for ten years with his disreputable uncle Bardas, first as counsellor, then as colleague, always as boon companion. Then he had him put out of the way, and set in his place as Caesar another boon companion but a very hard-headed one, his ex-groom Basil the Macedonian. A twelvemonth later Basil had Michael murdered after a carouse (867), and, being already Caesar, assumed the diadem without opposition; thus inaugurating the Macedonian dynasty, which reigned at Constantinople for nearly two centuries.

### **Final Partition of the Churches**

**I**N the last year of Michael, the Synod of Constantinople formulated the pronouncement which marked the irrevocable parting of the Church in the East from the Church in the West. It denounced as damnable heresies the Roman doctrines of the Procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, and of clerical celibacy. In the view of the Western Church, both were fundamental truths. Neither then nor since has success attended any efforts to bridge that impassable chasm. But the pronouncement itself was the outcome of the long-standing quarrel between Rome and Constantinople on the question of authority, which had reached a climax. In 858 Michael had of his own authority deposed the austere patriarch Ignatius and set in his place the more amenable Photius. The popes Benedict III and his successor, Nicholas I, had both proclaimed the invalidity of the action and denounced both Photius and the emperor in unmeasured terms; and Nicholas, of his own authority, excommunicated the Byzantine patriarch. The Synod gave the imperial reply to papal arrogance, and in doing so made the cleavage permanent.



# **MONUMENTS OF IMPERIAL POMP AND PIETY : CHARLEMAGNE'S THRONE IN HIS PALACE CHAPEL AT AACHEN**

Charlemagne began the building of the chapel in his palace at Aachen (right) --the older portion of the existing minster of Aix-la-Chapelle--in 796, and it was consecrated by Pope Leo III in 805. The central octagon is surrounded by an aisle with a gallery, and here the marble throne of Charlemagne (left) is now preserved. Charlemagne was buried under the dome, and tradition says that when his tomb was opened by Otto III in 1000 his body was disclosed dressed in coronation robes and seated in this chair. For centuries afterwards the chair was used at imperial coronations.

*Photos, Neue Photographische Gesellschaft*

# MEDIEVAL LIFE IN THE WESTERN KINGDOMS

Society as reorganized by Charles the Great  
and the Learning that flourished at his Court

By A. HAMILTON THOMPSON D.Litt. F.S.A.

Professor of History in the University of Leeds; Author of *English Monasteries*, etc.

**I**N view of the subsequent history of the Holy Roman Empire, it may be acknowledged that there was something artificial and theatrical about the coronation of Charles the Great. In the year 800, however, the ordinary observer might have been justified in the conclusion that the Empire of the West was revived, and that in no short time the borders of the Frankish Empire might be extended by further conquests.

Over his great domain Charles reigned with an undisputed power. The Frankish organization of counties ruled by the king's nominees was applied to his conquered territory. The strength of his rule was enhanced by his conception of his monarchy as the direct gift of God. The old Roman Empire and its survival at Constantinople were of purely pagan origin, to which no divine right could be attributed. On the other hand, the Frankish supremacy had been founded by Christian kings, who in time past had defended orthodox religion against Arian heretics, who had decisively checked Saracen inroads from the south, and whose successor was engaged in establishing Christianity among the heathen nations of his eastern frontier. The City of God of which Augustine had written in the last days of the Western Empire was within reasonable distance of realization under a Christian ruler whose kingdom was not wholly of this world.

As the saviour of the capital of the ancient world, which still retained the shadow of its republican constitution, Charles was also the protector of the episcopal see which traced its foundation to the Prince of the Apostles, and was venerated as the patriarchal see of the

West, with an authority increasingly recognized beyond its own immediate province. He received his imperial crown by the consent of the Roman people, at the hands of a representative who combined the prestige of a viceroy holding Rome in trust for the vanished Empire with a spiritual dignity of office derived from a divine source. The monarchy thus constituted was first and foremost Christian: its holder united spiritual attributes with temporal. His sway over peoples of different tongues, already sensible of national antipathies, was consolidated by his position as the arbiter of the destinies of the Church whose influence formed the common bond between them.

Thus Charles, however artificial his claims to be the successor of the Roman emperors might be from a practical point of view, was able to give them some reality. At the same time, he was also a national king in spite of his ideals of a theocratic and universal rule. Descended from an Austrasian family, he was himself an Austrasian, speaking a German tongue and ruling from an Austrasian capital or series of capitals; for, wherever the king went, there for the time being were his capital and court. Aachen (Aquisgranum), however, was the place which he favoured as the metropolis of his kingdom. Situated between the Rhine and Meuse, near the western frontier of Austrasia, its position with respect to the northern part of his realm was conveniently central.

Here he himself directed the building of a city in which his courtiers recognized a second Rome in the bloom of youth 'Here,' in the words of a Latin poem



attributed to Alcuin, 'shall be the forum and the holy senate which shall deal justice to the people and dictate law to ~~the~~.' Here rose, under the hands of workmen busy as a hive of bees, the royal palace, an imposing theatre and marble structures enclosing the hot baths whose virtues had been known to the subjects of the earlier Empire. The famous church dedicated to the Virgin, which was built in close neighbourhood to the palace, was the most conspicuous ornament of the city, as befitted the chief residence of the king chosen by God to be the ruler of Christendom; and from this church, in which Charles was eventually buried, the place obtained its name of Aix-la-Chapelle.

The government of Charles was an autocracy in which the king's word was law. In his court there was no great official corresponding to those mayors of the palace from whose stock he himself had sprung, and wielding a power equivalent

to that of a king. His ministers of state were the officers of his household, continually engaged in the duties of the palace and entirely subordinate to himself. To these might be delegated military or judicial duties upon occasion, but the responsibilities attached to their titles were primarily domestic. From their number emerge three who have special administrative importance. The count of the palace presided over the royal tribunal as the king's representative. The preparation and issue of official correspondence was under the direction of the chancellor, an ecclesiastic who took the place of the referendary, the lay minister to whom this work had been entrusted at the Merovingian court. Another ecclesiastic, the head of the chapel royal, was the chief counsellor of the king.

The titles of chancellor and arch-chaplain did not become fixed until after the time of Charles the Great, and that of



**CHARLEMAGNE'S HOMAGE TO THE VIRGIN MARY**

German Romanesque architecture began with Charlemagne. He was a great builder and according to Einhard, his secretary and biographer, the splendour of 'the basilica of the Most Holy Mother of God, constructed with wondrous workmanship at Aquisgratum (Aachen),' was the expression of his Christian devotion. Charlemagne also intended the church to be his mausoleum, and this sculpture from his shrine depicts the emperor dedicating the church to the Virgin Mary.

count of the palace ('pfalzgraf') was sometimes divided between two or three persons. The chancellor and his staff of clerks were attached to the royal chapel, and were thus subordinate from one point of view to the arch-chaplain, with the result that in process of time his office and that of chancellor were united. At first, however, the two were distinct: the arch-chaplain was prime minister, the keeper of the king's counsels, and his association with the chancery was merely of that occasional kind which was inevitable.

In the prominence thus given to ecclesiastical officials at the court of Charles, the double character of his rule as head of the Church and the State working together in complete co-operation is manifest. Similarly in the government of the provinces the authority of the two was blended. Under the Merovingian monarchy the cities, the old centres of provincial life before the Frankish conquests, were the nucleus of counties and ecclesiastical dioceses; the count and the bishop exercised parallel temporal and spiritual jurisdictions. How inharmonious their relations could be is illustrated by the feud between Gregory of Tours and the count Leudast, who attempted to disgrace and depose the bishop. This organiza-

**Co-operation of Church and State** tion was retained and systematised throughout his empire by Charles.

The count was the representative of the monarch in his county, the dispenser of justice who presided over the periodical assemblies of its freemen, the leader of its forces in time of war, the officer responsible for law and order. The distinction between the area of his jurisdiction and that of the bishop was not easy to define. The bishop had cognisance of spiritual offences, which gave him some natural advantage over the count, his spiritual son; but the theoretic relation between the two was an alliance in which each exercised surveillance over the other, reporting from time to time to the sovereign. The count was the protector of the Church within the limits of his rule, and the bishop could invoke his aid against those who were recalcitrant to the admonition of the spiritual authority.



#### CLERKS OF THE MEDIEVAL COURT

Ecclesiastical officials predominated in Charlemagne's court and later. These figures from a twelfth-century Latin Bible at Brussels show a clerk (left) and a bishop. Ecclesiastical costume had altered little in the intervening period.

*Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels, MS. 9107*

The appointment of the count was at the monarch's disposal. Although in theory the right of the clergy and people of the diocese to elect their bishops was recognized, such elections were controlled by representatives of the crown. To hold them, the king's leave was necessary; before the bishop-elect was consecrated, the royal assent had to be sought and obtained. Thus there was no guarantee of the actual freedom of election, if the king chose to press his own nominee upon a diocese. But, while the count and the bishop held their offices, the first actually and the second virtually by commission from the sovereign, the appointment of subordinates lay in their own power.

The division of the diocese into archdeaconries, and of the archdeaconries into deaneries under the supervision of arch-priests, had been customary from the time when Christianity began to extend from the urban centres into rural districts; it remained as the permanent form of diocesan organization. The organization of the county was not exactly parallel, for the 'missus' or deputy appointed by the count, who developed later into the 'vicecomes' or viscount, seems to have

been at first a temporary official who acted only when the count was unable to be present in person. The 'centenarii,' however, the hundred-men or judicial officers of the subdivisions of a county, corresponded more closely to the arch-priests of the rural deaneries, and, as a matter of fact, the jurisdictions of the centenarius and the arch-priest were often exercised within the same geographical limits.

The authority of the subordinate officials of the county covered only those minor cases which could be determined without affecting life, freedom

**Jurisdiction of the County Courts** or forfeiture of property. Such serious cases were reserved to the higher justice of the count. The 'mallus' or tribunal of the county was held at fixed periods, nominally once a month, as in Merovingian times, and was theoretically an assembly of all the freemen. Their obligatory attendance, however, was practically confined to three general assemblies in the year. Under the Merovingians the count had been assisted in his judgements by a body of assessors known as 'rachimburgi.' To these, in the time of Charles the Great, succeeded the 'scabini' ('échevins'), selected by the count from the most prudent and trustworthy freemen to act as permanent magistrates of the mallus, his own part being restricted to the presidency of the court and the pronouncement of their decisions.

The judgement of the county court was subject to appeal, either to ordeal in various forms or to the royal tribunal, the final court in matters temporal and spiritual. The latter form of appeal was carefully guarded from frivolous or premature use; to its employment in ecclesiastical cases the consent of the bishop was necessary, and its admission from the county court depended, in general, upon the appellant's failure to obtain justice after repeated demands.

Frankish administration, by the prominence which it gave to the count and his court, naturally weakened the operation of the smaller local courts of popular justice, whose origin belongs to a period before the establishment of Merovingian kingship. The centenarius to whom reference has been made was the old tribal judge, known

among the Salian Franks as 'thunginus,' the compeller. His office was entirely subordinated to that of the count; he became a minor official in the system which emanated from the king, and his title was gradually merged in that of the 'vicarius,' the count's deputy or vicar in the local tribunals. Such minor titles varied in different parts of the Empire, but the general system was the same; and under the strong rule of Charles it attained greater uniformity and cohesion. Further, the subordination of the popular courts and their judges was increased by the growth of private jurisdictions with their own officers, of which the royal domains are the most important example, and by the appointment of local officials for special purposes, whether by the count or by private owners.

While it is obvious that in the long run the multiplication of private jurisdictions involved complications of authority which led to disruption, the firm hand of Charles the Great controlled all the conflicting elements in the dominions subject to his rule. The chief manifestation of his personal relations with his empire was the general assemblies or 'placita' which it was his custom to hold twice a year at various centres. These were the successors of the Austrasian assemblies, originally held in March, a date changed in 755 by Pepin to May. Under Charles the month in which the Mayfield was held varied according to convenience, and a second assembly was convoked in the autumn. This latter, however, was a special meeting of the sovereign and his magnates for the discussion of private business, and the results of its deliberations were not disclosed until the following Mayfield, which had the character of a national gathering, attended by the counts, bishops, nobles and their followers.

Here the king presented for discussion the 'capitularies' or legal enactments which he had prepared. The discussion itself was confined to the magnates, the counts and lay noblemen deliberating apart from the bishops, abbots and superior clergy in different halls, or, in fine weather, in the open air. These meetings were

**The biannual General Assemblies**

adjourned from day to day until a result was reached. Charles meanwhile held himself ready to take part in the debates, if called upon; at the end, the resolutions were communicated to him, and he pronounced upon them. During the whole time he mingled freely with the crowd which had come with the magnates, receiving the presents which they brought him and entering into conversation with all and sundry, in which he showed a remarkable adaptability to his company.

The Mayfield was his opportunity for learning informally the state of his realm. He questioned his interlocutors on all sorts of matters; their impressions of the state of affairs in their own districts, the existence of complaints or discontent, the occurrence of breaches of law and

order, the temper of the subject tribes on his borders, the apprehension of barbarian

attacks upon the frontier. It was his ambition to know the causes of all the troubles that came under his notice, so as to embody remedies in his legislative acts. The Mayfield was, in short, a striking display of patriarchal government by a monarch whose absolute mastery of his realm was maintained in no small degree by a ready exercise of personal attraction.

The increase of dignity which he acquired by his coronation as emperor inspired Charles to establish fresh methods of central control in his dominions. He began to codify the Frankish systems of law with a view to uniformity of usage throughout the empire, a task which he left unfinished; he also ordered the unwritten laws of his barbarian subjects to be committed to writing. But his most important measure was the appointment of 'missi dominici' or imperial legates, made systematically for the first time in 802, though he had previously made occasional use of such officers. The object of this measure was to bring the speedy execution of royal justice within reach of his whole people. The realm for this purpose was divided into districts called 'missatica,' each comprising several counties and committed to two envoys chosen from the principal magnates of the court, men whose dignity might be considered

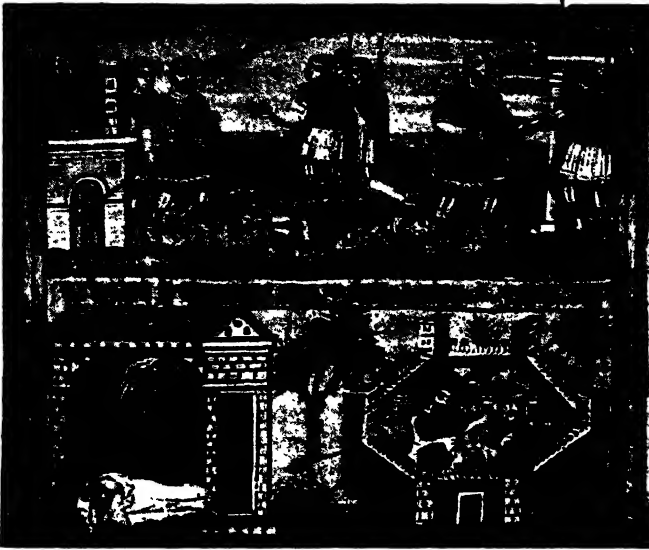
superior to the allurements of bribery. The ordinary method was to send a count or other noble layman, accompanied by a bishop or abbot, to each district.

These missi seem at the beginning to have been selected from persons of influence within the given area. Thus, in the capitulary by which they were appointed in 802, the three missatica of the northern part of the Neustrian kingdom were assigned to local magnates—e.g. Paris and its neighbourhood to Fardulf, abbot of St. Denis, and Stephen, the count of Paris. But this arrangement was not invariable, and the poem in which Theodulf, bishop of Orléans, describes a mission of this kind gives us a picture of two ecclesiastics, himself and the archbishop of Lyons, visiting the chief cities of Provence and Septimania, at a distance from their own dioceses. The decay of the system under the successors of Charles was due to its conduct by persons who, with interests mainly local, were out of touch with the central authority and were accessible to the corruption of which, as Theodulf shows, plentiful opportunities were offered to them.

The missi made their turn in their provinces once a year, either in January, April, July or October, holding placita in four different centres during the month. For that month their court superseded the count's mallus in each centre. Attendance was obligatory only upon the count and his vassals, and upon the scabini or county magistrates. The main business of the envoys was to render justice to the weak and oppressed without fear or favour. For this purpose the co-operation of the local count was necessary; difficulties which arose were referred to the emperor for decision. The missi were instructed to see that the counts and bishops worked in harmony, a problem which frequently needed attention from the central government; and the settlement of quarrels between the spiritual and temporal authorities or among persons of either department, if they could not be arranged peaceably, was reserved to the personal hearing of the emperor. It was also the duty of the missi to

**Circuits of the  
Imperial Legates**

**Patriarchal methods  
of the Emperor**



### CAROLINGIAN CASTLES AND COSTUME

Charles the Bald's famous illuminated bible is a mine of information about contemporary life in the Carolingian kingdom. This page, for example, illustrating scenes in the life of S. Paul, shows the Roman influence on costume that still persisted in the ninth century and the kind of castellated houses that nobles were beginning to build for themselves.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

receive the oath of fealty which Charles demanded from his subjects. This oath was first exacted by him in 789, after a long period of disuse into which the custom had fallen during the later Merovingian period and the rise of the Carolingian monarchy. In 802 it was stringently imposed upon every subject over the age of twelve. Oaths previously taken to Charles as king were now to be renewed to him as emperor. The solemn promise, made upon the relics at the altar of a church and in the presence of witnesses, was preceded by instructions from the missi concerning the responsibilities which it involved.

In the first place, the importance given to it by Charles was due to the existence of conspiracies which threatened his personal safety: it was an oath to abstain from plots against his life and attempts to introduce foreign enemies into his realm. To these negative undertakings were added positive obligations, obedience to the king's law, payment of his taxes, fulfilment of military duties, maintenance of the king's peace and regard for his rights in his domains. All these ideas were implied in the general formula by which the subjects swore to be faithful to Charles

'from this day forward, in good faith, without any fraud or ill design, for the honour of his royal dignity, even as every man should be faithful to his lord.'

Already, as the last clause in this passage shows, the theory of personal service to a feudal superior was gaining ground in the Frankish dominions. It was not yet sufficiently developed to manifest the risk which it involved to the security of the throne, and for the time being the oath of fealty to the crown might be taken as over-riding considerations of the vassal's duty to his immediate lord.

Thus, during the reign of Charles, a strong central authority overshadowed the increasing claims of private lordship. Popular law was harmonised with the royal

law which interpreted and qualified it. The capitularies which proceeded from the king himself were submitted to the nominal consent of the people by the missi, and were confirmed by the signatures of the scabini and the bishops, abbots and

### Supremacy of the Central Authority

counts who sat in their assemblies. The dangers of an absolutism depending entirely upon the personal qualities of the monarch and his ability to maintain the semblance of an autocratic government sanctioned by the consent of his people appeared soon after his death; but for the present his people recognized one master.

No measure of Charles illustrates his genius for personal oversight of his dominions more clearly than his ordinances for the management of the royal domains from which came the bulk of his revenue. Although portions of the lands belonging to the crown were granted as 'beneficia' to deserving subjects, and in the ownership of these the hereditary principle was already recognized, yet failure of heirs and forfeiture of estates were habitual contingencies which counterbalanced such diminutions of royal property, while an

heir, upon succession to his father's lands, was liable to payment for confirmation of his right. Moreover, the crown lands were continually increased by the acknowledged right of the king to territories without an owner, to the conquered districts of the march-lands and to those forest, riparian and mineral advantages independent of private ownership.

The basis of Charles's administration of his lands is the *Capitulaire de Villis*, which belongs to the earliest years of his reign, and is founded on the maxim that the king's 'villae' or farms should be managed for his personal profit and not for that of others. The intendants or stewards

were chosen from men of middle condition, not from magnates whose influence might be used to their own advantage. Minute directions are given to these officers for the stocking of the farm and the employment of its produce. The centre of the farm was the 'camera' or dwelling-house, fully furnished so that, if the king came that way, there would be no need to borrow fittings from elsewhere. It had its well-planted gardens and orchards; peacocks, pheasants, doves and other birds were kept for the ornament of its grounds. Near it were stables and out-houses, with coops for the fowls and geese, which were kept up to a prescribed number on the principal farms.

The tenants, freemen and serfs, were employed in all the manifold occupations of a self-supporting community, under the direction of the steward. There were special quarters where the women of the community worked at spinning, sewing and dyeing garments with materials supplied by the steward, the principal of which are enumerated, including the woad, vermillion and madder required for the last of these operations. Fish-ponds already existing were maintained and enlarged, or new ones were made. The forests of the

estate were carefully preserved and replanted where they showed signs of thinning; excessive felling of trees was forbidden, with the formation of new clearings in the woods. The skins of the wolves taken during the year were to be sent to the king, and in May the steward was directed to hunt or use other means to destroy wolf cubs. He was ordered to present an annual inventory of all the details under his charge to the king at Christmas, in which the particulars were to be definitely stated without formal generalities, and they were charged to be equally punctilious in obtaining such details from the officers who looked after the departments included in the account.

This organization of the royal estates was the model followed by other proprietors. As yet, the actual boundary between freedom and serfdom was somewhat indefinite, and in any case the legal status of the free tenant did not exempt him from his personal service of work upon the estate or from the annual gifts in kind with which he was expected to provide his lord from his own tenement. A large number of farms were entrusted to independent cultivators in return for fixed personal services and payments; but under the oversight of the chief



#### FEUDAL SERVANTS BOND AND FREE

In the early feudal constitution of society the serfs (left) were virtually slaves; but the line between serfdom and freedom was vague and the free-born tenants and their wives (right) were also employed compulsorily on specified duties. The two orders are thus depicted in the twelfth-century *Dialogues* of S. Gregory.

*Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels, MS. 9917*

farms, at the head of which was the steward, with the title of 'villicus,' were smaller farms grouped together under the management of local bailiffs or 'decani,' the chief farms serving as the reservoirs for the surplus of the smaller.

Although money taxes were levied upon individuals for special reasons, there was no system of general taxation for state purposes. The gifts which were brought to the king at the Mayfield seem to have varied in quality and quantity, and to have been subject to no fixed system. The place of taxes, however, was taken by the general obligation of the inhabitants of a district to public services, the maintenance of roads and bridges and other public buildings by personal labour and contributions; while the entertainment of the monarch or of his envoys upon demand was a duty which fell heavily upon neighbourhoods liable to such visitations.

But the most important of public services, in a reign which was so largely spent in warfare and conquest, was the equipment of the king's host. In the early days of the Frankish tribes, the

military duties which were incumbent upon every man were the result of individual equality of freedom. This could be no longer assumed with the increasing complication of Carolingian society and the growth of an unfree class bound to the soil. At the same time, the principle of universal obligation to military service continued to exist.

Charles, engaged in campaigns upon all hands, used it to suit the occasion, varying his demands according to the seriousness of the war and the districts of his empire affected by it, and endeavouring to graduate the burden in proportion to the capacity of the bearer. Only in the gravest circumstances, such as those of his war against the Avars, did he resort to a general levy; according to his usual custom, subjects who dwelt at a distance from the theatre of war had to furnish a lighter contingent than those whose frontiers were immediately threatened.

The importance of his military regulations, however, depends upon their recognition of property as the basis of service. Although the minimum of the property qualification varied in keeping with the



**ART AND COSTUME IN THE LOMBARD PROVINCE OF CHARLES'S EMPIRE**

A notable example of Lombard art is the series of stucco reliefs of female saints in the chapel of the Lombard kings at Cividale del Friuli. Byzantine influence is strongly marked in the costume, which is virtually identical with the classical court dress of Theodora and her ladies as depicted in the earlier mosaics at San Vitale in Ravenna (see plate facing page 2303). Lombardy produced many skilful architects and masons and, later, these contributed not a little to the general revival of art that began in Charlemagne's more northern dominions



contingencies mentioned above, it was the fundamental feature of this side of his legislation. When the 'heriban' or summons to war went out, the count was to see that the free proprietors of his county made themselves ready. The minimum was fixed at the possession of a certain number of manses. He who owned this number was the unit of the host; if he owned less he was obliged to find another man of small property who could make up the necessary amount. Thus, in one capitulary, the obligation is stated:

Whoever possesses four manses, whether in full ownership, or by the title of 'beneficium,' must equip himself at his own cost and present himself at the host. He who possesses three shall unite with another man who has only one, and the second man shall aid the first, so that he may serve for both. He who has two shall unite with another owner of two, and one of them shall equip himself with the other's aid. Possessors of only one manse shall associate themselves in groups of four, and one of them shall go, while the others stay at home.

The capitulary of 807, which applied to the southern part of the Frankish realm and set the minimum of landed property at three 'mansii,' extended the principle to the personal property of landless persons, and ordered any who possessed five shillings to join a group of six, which was to make itself responsible for the equipment of a single warrior.

The counts were expected to appear at the muster of the army with all their men, except a few who might be left behind to protect their lord's wife and manage his domestic affairs. Similarly bishops and abbots, although excused from fighting, sent their lay vassals, of whom only two in each case might stay behind. Those who stayed, however, paid a fine for the privilege. Thus the army was recruited partly from the estates of the magnates who were directly subordinate to the monarch himself.

As we have seen, the property qualification fell upon the holders of beneficial estates held by the favour of a superior, as well as upon those to whom estates belonged in their own right. Apart from the king's own beneficiaries, there were others whose 'beneficia' were derived from



CAROLINGIAN CAVALRY

Carolingian law required all freemen to equip themselves with hauberk, or byrnie, a coat of mail hanging from neck to knee with loose elbow sleeves and divided skirt for convenience in riding. Their arms were spear and buckler.

*Miniature from the Psalterium Aureum at St. Gall*

his subjects, either as territories carved out of a larger property, or as lands surrendered by their owners to others and returned to them as subordinate holdings. To obtain an adequate force, it was necessary to bring these within the obligation of service. Accordingly, the term beneficiary was used to cover all who could be brought under the description. All who possessed or represented the specified number of mansii held as a beneficium of any senior ('seigneur') were to come with their lord to the host, or, if he did not come, with the count.

These expedients to fill the ranks of the army, and at the same time to lighten the hardship of service for the more needy, held within them important consequences which can hardly have been foreseen by Charles. The tenure of land as the basis of military service takes the place formerly occupied by the personal duty of the free tribesman. For the time being the conditions were unfixed, and the demand was proportioned to the occasion; but the inevitable result was to transfer the duty from the individual to the estate which he held. In the future it will be such and such a holding of land that is bound to supply a fighting man or contribute to his support according to a regular and invariable assessment: the actual tenant will do the service, not on his own

account, but in virtue of his holding, to which the same service will continue to be attached after his day, quite irrespectively of personal ownership.

Further, the recognition of the beneficium as a gift which it was in the power of any landowner to convey to a subordinate, controlled by the crown only in so far as the beneficiary is bound to answer the summons to the host, was the first step in the establishment of the feudal hierarchy in which every man had his lord and was immediately responsible to him as his tenant. Each private lord who went to war brought with him his vassals, who fought with him and for him, and were bound to him by special ties.

The property qualification, moreover, if its gradation was in favour of the weaker tenants, did not benefit

**Development of feudalism** them in the long run. To the small free proprietor it was irksome: it made continual claims upon him which he found it difficult to meet repeatedly. In practice the poor man, unable to meet his liabilities, was often compelled to 'commend' himself to a richer person for protection or relief from his creditors or oppressors, and the price of the benefit was often the mortgage of his holding and the loss of personal freedom for himself and his descendants. The attachment of costly duties to the possession of real property increased the prevalence of this custom. The small landowner found it difficult to stand alone, and yielded himself to a superior, who took over his responsibility.

The system was not yet complete: by Carolingian legislation the freeman who sought the protection of a superior was free, when that superior died, to choose another lord. But the number of men who owned no lord but the king himself was decreasing, and was gradually becoming restricted to the wealthiest magnates. As the remnants of the free population were drawn into a service which either curtailed or completely removed their freedom, the power of the great tenants and their chief vassals grew, until, with a band of followers bound to them by oaths of homage and fealty in return for grants of land from their wide estates, they stood

between the king and his subjects and wielded an authority which was a menace to the throne.

As long as Charles the Great lived, these tendencies were kept well in check, and their development was arrested until some years after his death. For the permanence of his Empire a succession of monarchs as able and active as himself was necessary. This he either disregarded or judged impossible; at any rate he followed the usual Frankish custom of partitioning among his sons. The division made at Thionville in 806, between Louis, Pepin and Charles, showed no consciousness of natural geographical boundaries; on the other hand, from this time the separate monarchies of France and Germany took their origin, and the permanent division of the Franks of Neustria, with a language influenced and transformed by their contact with Gallo-Roman civilization, and those of Austrasia, speaking a Teutonic tongue and preserving much of the primitive character and customs of their race, was achieved.

From the anarchy of the reign of Louis the Pious and his sons emerged also the feudal constitution of society to which the legislation of Charles the Great had contributed a great, if unconscious, impetus (see Chap. 102). Appearing first in the western kingdom, it gradually extended **Emergence of the Feudal System** itself throughout the Frankish dominions. A host of principalities and lordships grew up with independent administrations checked by no central power. The problem for the future was the re-establishment of royal authority over these separate jurisdictions, insecure in themselves and mutually hostile. When the solution came, the revival of the monarchy of Charles was no longer possible. The treaty of Verdun (see page 2422) was founded upon national distinctions, and it was by national sovereigns that the chaos of feudal government was to be brought into order, and the weaknesses of the system to be turned to the advantage of royal dignity.

The period during which Charles the Great held western Europe in his hand was more than an era of preparation

for feudal society. The most enduring feature of the great emperor's rule was the encouragement which it gave to arts and letters. Charles himself was in no sense a learned person; his biographer, Einhard, indeed, says that he did not attempt to learn to write until late in life, and that, in spite of application, he never mastered the art. But his high intelligence and profound curiosity led him to court the society of learned men and take part in their discussions. Naturally eloquent, he clothed his thought readily in words, and spoke several languages, including Latin, easily. 'So wise was he in speech that he seemed to be a great clerk or a great master,' says the chronicler of St. Denis.

He sat at the feet of the savants whom he attracted to his court, especially Alcuin and the grammarian Peter of Pisa. Under his patronage learning revived throughout the Empire. The direction which it took was pre-eminently that of sacred study. Charles was specially interested in theological controversy; the practical aspect of his conception of monarchy as a Christian theocracy is shown, not only in the process of conversion which attended his conquests, but by his part in the repression of the Adoptionist heresy in which Felix, bishop of Urgel, sought to reconcile the divinity and humanity of Christ by the theory that He was a man adopted by the Father as His Son.

Although the scholars of the imperial court were acquainted with the works of classical Latin authors, it was rather from the grammatical than the literary and humanistic side: their Latin style was the rich and living vernacular of their age, influenced by the study of Christian theologians, and especially by that of Augustine, the Father in whose work



#### NINTH CENTURY COURT ATTIRE

Carolingian ceremonial dress is shown in detail in this miniature depicting Charles the Bald accepting the gift of his illuminated Bible from the canons of St. Martin at Tours in 869. The clergy wear elaborate stoles, the king and courtiers garb of Roman fashion, the royal mantle being of embroidered cloth of gold.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

were contained the fundamental ideas of medieval theology. The Carolingian renaissance of learning was thus a Christian movement, directed by the Church, with the emperor as its supreme head; and, although its immediate effects were checked by political confusion, it gave the first impetus to the scholarship and encyclopedic learning of the Middle Ages.

The establishment of a school in the royal palace goes back to the early days of the reign of Charles, many years before the idea of a revived Western Empire took shape or was carried into practice. In 782 Alcuin of York was induced to take up his abode at the court and direct the studies of the palace school. The cathedral school at York, in which he had received his training and over which he had presided, suffered by his emigration; but

his arrival in the Frankish kingdom marked an epoch in European learning. His acquaintance with the king developed into a close friendship. Not only was the school a centre of teaching for young clerks; it was the theatre of discussion between Charles and his courtiers on all manner of questions connected with the liberal sciences.

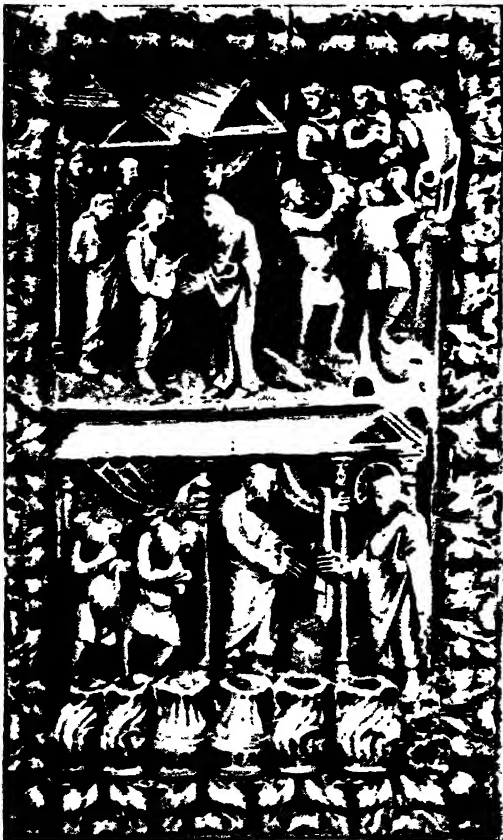
The members of this academy assumed names taken from history and legend. Charles himself was known as David, Alcuin as Horatius Flaccus, Einhard, famous for his interest in matters of art, as Bezaleel. The proficient pupils of the school were rewarded with promotion which brought them in time to bishoprics and the headship of important monasteries. It was, indeed, by schools modelled upon the pattern set by the royal establishment, and founded in cathedral cities and



#### ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN

In the great monasteries of Carolingian times were many devoted artists who worked with their own hands. The type is suggested in this picture of the building of the Temple, from the Golden Psalter illuminated at St. Gall in 872.

*From the *Psalterium Aureum* at St. Gall*



#### CAROLINGIAN IVORY PANEL

This panel carved in very high relief depicts, above, the marriage feast at Cana, with Our Lord conversing with His Mother, and, below, Christ changing the water into wine. The foliate border is typical of Carolingian ivories.

monasteries, that knowledge now began to spread through western Europe.

If the contribution of monasteries to learning in later times has been somewhat overstated, there can be no question of their value from this point of view during the Carolingian epoch. Alcuin's retirement from court to preside over the great abbey of S. Martin at Tours implied no abatement in his learned labours. The activity in their dioceses of such bishops as Theodulf of Orléans, the Flavius Damoetas of the palace coterie, and the stimulus to monastic education given by such abbots as its Homer, Angilbert of St. Riquier, extended the influence of the palace far beyond its immediate precincts and filled the Empire with centres of culture.

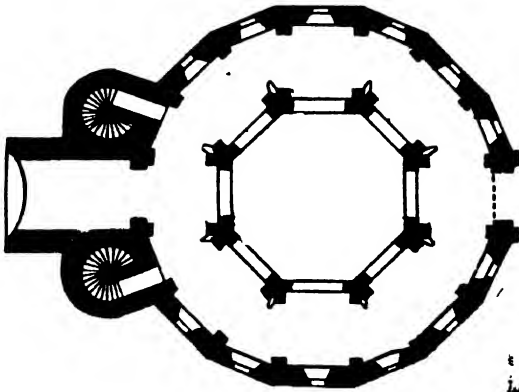
In literature the age produced no work quite so remarkable and so individual as

that great legacy of the Merovingian epoch, the history of Gregory of Tours. Chronicles, however, the Latin of which showed more attention to conventional grammar than that of Gregory, began to abound; the annals of the monastery of Lorsch (*Annales Laureshamenses*) are a leading source for the political history of the Carolingian monarchy, and the chronicler of St. Denis and the monk of St. Gall supply much information about the times and court of Charles. The *Vita Caroli* by Einhard, founded on close personal knowledge of the monarch, is one of the earliest classics of medieval biography: modelled upon the example of Suetonius, its object was not a history of the reign, but a portrait of the emperor and his environment in which personal traits

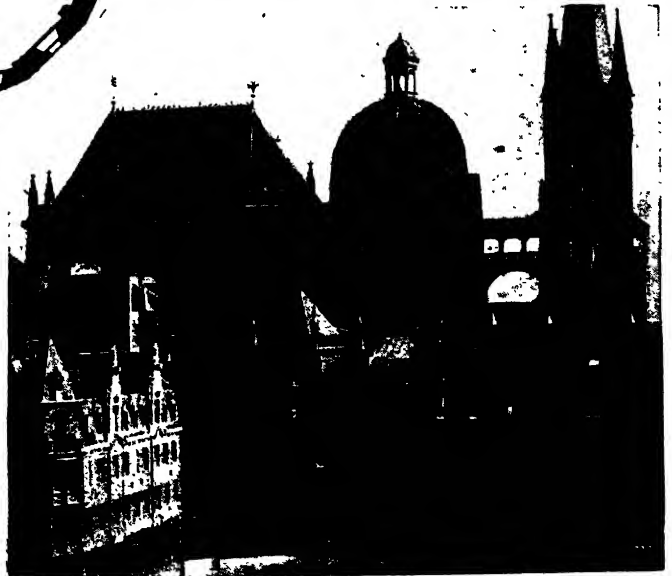
general and high-flown terms, the building in connexion with which his work of education had been carried on before he passed into the service of Charles, and introduces us to the studies which, learned there, he promoted throughout his life.

While court influence encouraged the growth of a new Latin literature worthy of the revival of the Roman Empire, we must not forget that, at the same period, a vernacular literature was making its way in the form of popular songs, and that the figure of the great emperor became the central point of an epic cycle. It was in the south-western districts of his Empire that these lays began to take shape, and it is significant of the country of their origin that their incidents are connected, not with his victories over the Saxons and Avars, but with his Spanish campaign and the action of Roncevaux (*Roncesvalles*).

The political system, the social life and the culture of medieval Europe were thus the result of the union of the Western nations beneath a ruler who, although it was past his power to ensure their permanent unity, was able to found an improved civilization which survived their division into separate kingdoms. In no



are set in effective relief. Alcuin, who, like the Venerable Bede, from whose example he had profited through his master Albert of York, took all knowledge for his province, was a prolific writer of Latin; his correspondence, that of a man whose advice was much in request and who was called upon to give his opinion upon important matters of state, is of historical as well as of literary value. In Latin verse he was equally skilled; to English readers his long poem in hexameters upon the church of York and its prelates is of peculiar interest, as it describes, though in somewhat



THE MINSTER AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

Substantially Charlemagne's palatine chapel at Aachen was a copy of San Vitale at Ravenna, built 250 years earlier. Both have a dome over an octagon with a two-storeyed surrounding aisle—sixteen-sided at Aachen—approached by staircases in circular turrets at the west end (see plan above).

*Photo, Neue Photographische Gesellschaft*

respect was that civilization more fruitful than in the impulse which it gave to art, and more particularly to architecture.

Reference has already been made to the new Rome which the courtiers of Charles the Great saw in process of construction at Aix. The palatine chapel which was its chief ornament still survives, surrounded by additions of later periods. Its octagonal plan was clearly inspired by that of the church of San Vitale at Ravenna, a work of two and a half centuries earlier; its architectural details follow the same model in general outline. While they have nothing of the grace and refinement of their original, a product of Byzantine civilization in the city where the influences of East and West met most closely during the century in which it was built, the imitation has a vigour which denotes something more than a merely antiquarian revival. Just as the Empire

d. Charles, founded upon ancient precedent, held beneath its borrowed trappings a vital force which created a new European society, so beneath the superficial copies of Roman art, enriched by marble columns and other decorations brought from the ancient monuments of Rome and Ravenna, there existed the germs of an architecture which, developing through a variety of provincial forms, was to culminate in the Gothic architecture of the Middle Ages.

The buildings which can be attributed with any certainty to the reigns of Charles and his immediate descendants are comparatively few, and modern scientific inquiry has cast doubt upon the early date of some whose Carolingian origin has often been taken for granted: but the literary evidence for the monuments of the period is abundant. Here and there we are able to identify actual buildings of which records have come down to us. The

mosaic of the apse at Germigny-des-Prés (Loiret) bears the inscription which records its foundation by Theodulf, bishop of Orléans. Traditionally modelled upon the pattern of the chapel at Aix, this structure, 'a church of such marvellous work,' according to one writer, 'that no building could be found comparable to it in the whole of Neustria,' resembles its original only in the adoption of a plan whose lines converge upon a central point.

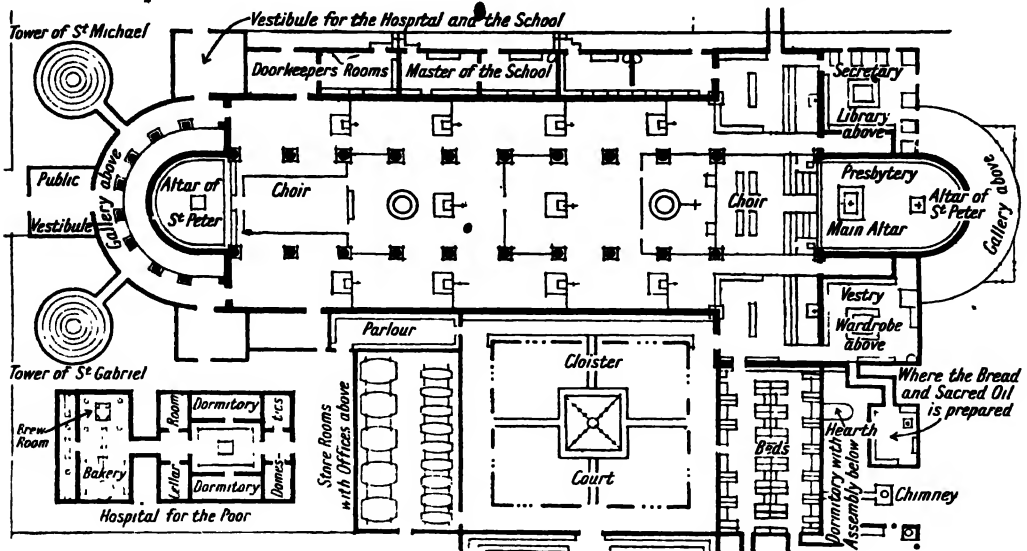
But such undoubted examples of Carolingian art are few and far between, and the descriptions of the great abbey churches which rose in numbers during the first half of the ninth century are too vague and rhetorical to enable us to reconstruct them with positive certainty. One point, however, is obvious. During this period the cruciform church, with its apsidal presbytery, transept and long-aisled nave, became the ordinary plan of the monastic church. This is the type of



#### CAROLINGIAN ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE

The church at Germigny-des-Prés, Loiret, France, was built 801-6 by Theodulph, bishop of Orléans, traditionally in imitation of Charlemagne's palatine chapel at Aachen. In plan it is a Greek cross, the four arms ending in horseshoe apses, with a cupola supported on four columns in the centre.

*From Rivoira, 'Moslem Architecture'*



PLAN OF THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY OF ST. GALL

The Benedictine monastery of St. Gall was built about 820, and a contemporary plan of its proposed arrangements has been preserved. As shown in the section reproduced here the church is cruciform, with a nave of nine bays and a semicircular apse at both the east and the west ends. The western apse is surrounded by a semicircular colonnade leaving an open 'paradise' between it and the wall of the church. The north walk of the cloister served as the chapter house at St. Gall.

*After Porter, Medieval Architecture*

church which appears with an apse at either end in the famous plan of the monastery of St. Gall, and it was in the development of this type from the timber-roofed to the stone-vaulted structure that the line of subsequent progress lay.

It was in the western districts of the Empire that the impetus in this direction seems to have started. Thus, as early as 783, the construction of the monastery of St. Riquier on the Somme, including a great basilican church of the character shown upon the plan of St. Gall, was begun by the abbot Angilbert; this and other churches of the kind in Neustria were in existence before the architectural movement was taken up in the Rhenish and German provinces. The activity of builders in Austrasia did not reach its height until the reign of Louis the Pious. About 815 Ratger, the third abbot of Fulda, began to construct the church, formed by uniting two earlier buildings within the monastic precincts, in which lay the body of S. Boniface, the martyred apostle of the Germans. He sent for advice to Neustria, where the best was to be found at Tours and Fontenelle, the abbeys presided over by Alcuin and Einhard. There is a tra-

dition that the plan of St. Gall was designed by Einhard himself; this is quite uncertain, and the drawing itself was probably intended to be a general pattern which need not have been followed exactly at St. Gall, the church of which was begun about 829.

At the same time, if it was on French soil that the advance towards the most characteristic form of medieval church building was definitely made in the first instance, the origin of the most striking feature of the plan, the apse with ambulatory and radiating chapels, cannot be referred with certainty to this period. Although examples have been cited, these rest upon insecure deductions from literary texts, and the earliest instance to which an approximate date can be given is the apse, of which foundations remain, of the great national sanctuary of S. Martin at Tours, belonging to a reconstruction of the beginning of the tenth century.

The progress of which we have spoken took place within the Frankish kingdom. But the ultimate models of the Carolingian architects were of an older date, and in Gaul in particular the buildings of the age formed a new link in a continuous chain





ST. RIQUIER ON THE SOMME

The characteristic medieval cruciform church, with long nave, transepts and apsidal presbytery, was first developed in the western provinces of the Empire. An early specimen is the monastery church of St. Riquier on the Somme, built in 783; after a manuscript illumination

*From Lasleyrie, 'L'architecture romane'*

which went back to the days of the Roman occupation. The influences which produced medieval architecture may not have been wholly of Western and Roman origin; a school of critics to whose judgement respect is due lays stress upon the possible infiltration of architectural motives from Oriental countries. There is no reason, however, to doubt the appropriateness of the title Romanesque, generally applied to the western European architecture which came into being after the fall of the old Roman Empire.

Nor was it necessary that this architecture should proceed directly from an Italian source, although it was in Italy that the works of art were chiefly to be found which Charles the Great removed

for the beautification of the chapel at Aix and the royal palace of Ingelheim. In the cities of Gaul there still existed monuments of Roman architecture, arches, amphitheatres and relics of baths and palaces, which could afford patterns and suggestions to builders. There is thus no need to assume a regular progress of architecture from Italy northwards at this period; this had taken place already as the result of Roman conquest, and the revival of the art, in the hands of a vigorous people united under a monarch on whom the mantle of the Western emperors had fallen, had as good an opportunity upon the banks of the Loire or the Rhine, or among the cities of Provence, as in Italy itself.

While, on the other hand, there is no doubt that Italy, with her past prestige, contributed, as time went on, to the progress of Romanesque art north of the Alps, the obstinate legend which assumes that the diffusion of Romanesque architecture was achieved by groups of artists, whose organization in guilds had continued unbroken throughout the barbarian invasions of Italy, is without historical basis. The mention of masons under the name 'comacini' in the laws of the Lombard kings of the seventh century is responsible for the fiction that there was a guild or school of

builders in the neighbourhood of Como, whose central workshops were upon the island of Comacina, and that from these and from the jealously preserved secrets of their craft European architecture was revived.

It is unquestionable that Lombardy produced skilful masters of the art, and that these found their way into other countries as at the end of the tenth century, when William of Volpiano invited Italian masters to take part in the reconstruction of the abbey of St. Bénigne at Dijon. But the resemblance of the word 'comacinus' to Como or Comacina is superficial alone; just as 'comonachus' means one of a body of monks, so 'co-macinus' means one of a body of masons, whether at Como or anywhere

else. Further, of any definite organization of such bodies, or of any obligation binding a mason to work in any particular company, there is no evidence at this date, nor indeed for many centuries afterwards.

Names of masters remain to us from the days of Charles the Great, as of Odo, to whom the building of the chapel of Aix was entrusted. How far Einhard was himself an artist is uncertain. That he was an earnest and highly intelligent patron of art is beyond question. This, too, may be said of such abbots as Angilbert or Ratger and Eigil of Fulda, to whom the term 'sapiens architectus,' a wise master-builder was applied in the figurative sense taken from the epistles of S. Paul. But we hear of Geimmo, the 'architectus' of Remiremont, who was probably the master of the masons. At Corbeny, in 864, Eygil, abbot of Flavigny, constructed the church of S. Peter and S. Paul with the help of masons ('cementarii') and craftsmen ('artifices'). Among the monks of the great abbeys there were probably in these days of enthusiasm trained artists who worked with their own

**Monkish Architects and Master Masons** hands. Such men, for example, were to be found at St. Gall in the ninth century. 'What,' wrote Bishop Ermanric to the archchaplain Grimoald, 'is Winihard but a very Daedalus? What is Isenric but a second Bezaleel, in whose hand the chisel is always at work? So great is their humility that, though they are such accomplished men, they do not disdain to do the work of labourers in their own persons.'

Of the subsequent development of Romanesque architecture we cannot speak at length here. Finding its way to achievement along many different paths, forming itself into distinct provincial styles in obedience to the demands of climate and local material, solving the problem of the stone vault in accordance with the opportunities so afforded, it attained in the Norman provinces, in Normandy itself and in England the point at which the way was ready for the conversion of its massive forms into the grace and lightness of Gothic construction. As the earliest impulse to its forward movement had proceeded from the churches and cloisters

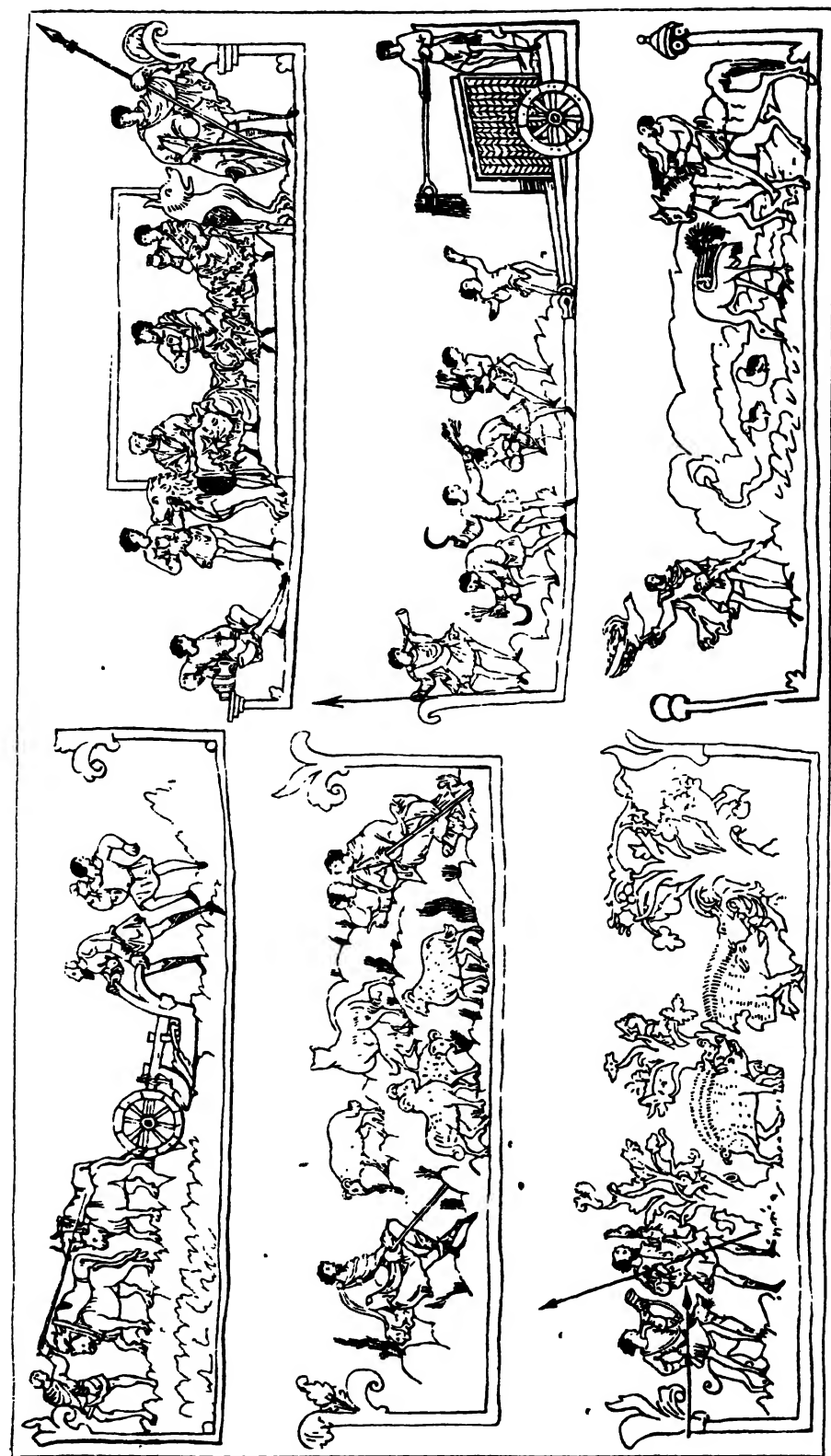
of the Neustrian kingdom, so its final consummation was reached upon French soil, in the abbey church of St. Denis and the cathedral churches of northern France, in which the principles inherent in its gradual progress received their logical application in the language of a new architectural style.

Apart from the references to the buildings of Aix and the imperial palaces, civil and domestic architecture play little part in the records of the eighth and ninth centuries. With the growth of feudalism, the castle, its characteristic symbol, came into being; already in the capitulary of Quierzy there occur allusions to the construction of private strongholds. These, however, were at this date only earth-works with timber defences, and the domestic accommodation which they afforded can have given little opportunity for architectural display. For the development of military and civil architecture we have to look to a later age.

The artistic energy of the Christian Empire was concentrated upon the erection of churches and monasteries; it was in these that the authors of the day discovered the wonders of their age, and it was through them that the straight path of future advance led. However unsubstantial were the theories of monarchy held by Charles the

Great, however complete their practical failure under his successors, the importance which he gave to the spiritual element in his rule, and his conception of the Empire as a state primarily Christian, continued to have a profound effect upon medieval thought, and the greatest masterpieces of medieval art were produced by minds in which the spiritual and secular elements in life were closely associated, and in which the second of these was employed to temper the first. Already, under the sway of supernatural influence, the creative imagination found its outlet in the service of the Church, and the art which was to be applied in process of time to castles and dwelling-houses was merely the reflection, for certain definite and practical purposes, of the art which had been chiefly fostered in that service.

**Art in the Service of the Church**



#### PURSUIITS AND LABOURS THAT FILLED THE YEAR OF THE ANGLO-SAXON FARMER

The illustrations to a calendar, done some time after the year 1000, give the complete round, month by month, of an Anglo-Saxon freeman's year. The months shown here, reading across the page from the top, are : January, ploughing and sowing—note the wheeled plough drawn by oxen ; April, feasting—that is, a respite after the winter's tillage ; May, tending sheep ; August, harvesting the corn with sickles and pitchforking it into a farm wagon ; September, hunting boars on foot in the forest—another respite after the labours of the harvest ; and October, hawking.

*British Museum ; Cotton MSS., Julius A. vi*

# THE LIFE OF SAXON ENGLAND

How the old Roman Province fared for half  
a Millennium under its Teutonic Conquerors

By R. W. CHAMBERS D.Lit. F.B.A.

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Author of A Source Book for England Before the Norman Conquest, etc.

**D**URING the troubled last decades of the Roman Empire, Britain was again and again denuded of its Roman troops; and the year 410, when Alaric sacked Rome, is generally regarded as also marking the end of the official connexion between Rome and Britain, though there are those who hold that the Roman legions were in effective occupation for some years longer.

Our last satisfactory picture of Roman Britain belongs to a period nearly twenty years after Alaric's sack of Rome. S. Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, visited it to help the orthodox in their controversy with heretics. The account of his visit was written at a date sufficiently near the saint's life to merit credence, and the story shows us the Britons still trying to live the ordinary life of Roman provincials. S. Germanus refuted the heretics at a synod held at Verulamium; he visited and revered the shrine of S. Alban; we hear of men 'of tribunician rank,' of wealthy magnates gorgeously dressed.

Cities and shrines, then, were still standing, and, what is more, standing in those parts of the island nearest to the dreaded Saxons. It is this which makes the account in the Life of S. Germanus so interesting. Other Lives, like that of S. Samson of Dol at a later date, represent the western part of the island as untouched by the invaders. But S. Germanus is the last person on record who saw the eastern parts of Britain with a Roman-British civilization still dominant. It is true that we hear, in the same Life, of the attacks of combined bodies of raiders, the Picts from the north and the Saxons from oversea. It is rather ominous that the British seem to have had no efficient leaders against their foes; or, if they had,

these leaders inspired them with so little confidence that they sent for S. Germanus, and his comrade S. Lupus, bishop of Troyes, to encourage them. We hear that Germanus did put spirit into the British, and that under his leadership they won a battle—the Hallelujah Victory.

Then the curtain is rung down, and how little the Roman world knew of what was going on in Britain we may gather from two facts. About the middle of the next century Procopius—a well informed historian writing in the centre of civilization, Constantinople—records the superstition that the souls of the dead were ferried to Britain from the opposite

side of the Channel. A little later the great Pope Gregory made his famous remark about the curly-headed youths whom he met in Rome, that they were not Angles but angels. No one who knew much of the Angles at this date would have thought them angels. Gregory had no such hallucinations about his neighbours the Lombards, whom he calls 'unspeakable.' A closer acquaintance would have shown him that Angle and Lombard were much alike. But the noble savage looks noblest from a safe distance.

And so, nearly a hundred and seventy years after S. Germanus first touched the shores of Britain, S. Augustine was sent on his mission by Gregory; and the curtain rises once more. What we see is something utterly different from the Britain which S. Germanus had visited. The whole of the south-east, at any rate, is heathen in creed and Teutonic in speech. There are British Christians living yet, but Augustine goes nearly to the Bristol Channel to meet them. (The meeting gave little satisfaction to either side.)

This change, from Britain to England, was fundamental for all the future history of the land; yet as to its details it is wiser to admit ignorance. It was not till more than four hundred years after the beginning of the English invasion that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was drawn up in the form in which we now have it. In this Chronicle we find a number of dates purporting to record battles fought in the conquest of England, stages in the settlement. These dates and names were doubtless drawn from some earlier record, but, even so, their value will always remain a subject of controversy. It is true that the English invaders were not quite what a modern journalist would call unalphabetic. They had a system of writing—the runic letters—which was an adaptation (made in very early times by the Germanic tribes) of the Graeco-Roman alphabet. Such letters they had used in their old home in Slesvig, to scratch a name on the sheath of a sword, or to make a record of workmanship round the rim of an ornamented horn. But we have no reason to think that this runic alphabet was ever used for the more elaborate purposes of historical composition. People sometimes write as if the Anglo-Saxons had landed in Britain with blank copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under their arms, and had proceeded to enter up the more important events, in intervals of

the fighting. Alike in heathen and in Christian times runes seem to have

been used only for comparatively short inscriptions, like those on the 'Franks' casket and the Ruthwell Cross.

It is pretty safe to say that it was not till some considerable time after Christianity had been introduced by Augustine that any idea of a connected chronicle occurred to Englishmen. The material such a chronicler would have to use would be oral. **The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle** the same type as those which, five hundred years or more before, Tacitus had noted as being the one kind of annals prevalent among the Teutonic tribesmen (see page 2218). A chronicle based on such material must necessarily be, to say the least, unsystematic and imperfect; even if the matters mentioned in it be in themselves accurate, we cannot treat the chronicle as a scientific summary of the leading events. An unimportant skirmish would be remembered because of some heroic episode in the fight, while an epoch-making battle might well be passed over, as being all in the day's work.

We are not altogether in the dark here, because on the Continent we are sometimes able to compare the story, as recorded by a contemporary Latin or Greek annalist, with the story as modified in the traditional poetry of the Germanic tribes—Goths or Burgundians or Franks. We can see what an unsafe basis for historic conjectures such tradition affords, even when it is indisputably historic in origin. Some fact is there, but much has been misrepresented, and much forgotten. And, for that reason, no argument can ever be



#### INSCRIPTIONS IN THE 'FUTHORC,' QR RUNIC ALPHABET

Runes were known to the Anglo-Saxons on the mainland and were carried with them to England; but they were used only for short inscriptions, and there is no evidence that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, composed much later, when Christianity had disseminated the alphabet, was based on historical runic documents. Top left: owner's name scratched in runes on the chape of a sword from Nydam (Denmark); remainder: runic inscriptions from the Northumbrian 'Franks' casket (see page 2457).

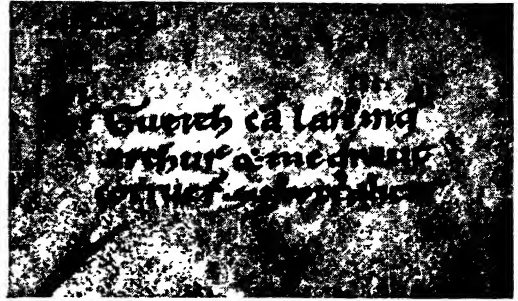
British Museum

drawn from silence. The Celtic traditions about Arthur are evidence (and evidence which cannot be ignored) that such a champion did actually lead the British hosts in their struggle against the Saxon invaders. The fact that Arthur is never mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is absolutely no evidence whatsoever against his existence. It does not justify us in disregarding the references to him (late eighth century) in Nennius and the *Annales Cambriae*.

It is more surprising that the earliest reference from the British side makes no mention of Arthur, though the omission does perhaps admit of explanation. Gildas the Wise was a British cleric who wrote while the Saxon conquest was in progress, and he mentions, not Arthur, but a certain Ambrosius Aurelianus as having brought the enemy, for the time being, to a standstill. Gildas is one of the most disappointing of writers: he might have told

us so much, and he tells us almost nothing. He was more intent on admonishing his contemporaries than informing posterity. It is as if some future historian had to gather what information he could about the progress of the Great War from a volume of sermons preached in S. Paul's between 1914 and 1918. We do gather, however, from Gildas that the Saxon invasion was a sudden flood which devastated all the eastern part of the island, forcing its victims to take refuge in the more mountainous west; and that, after the first flood, there was something of an ebb—that the invaders had devastated more land than they were able to hold:

For the fire—a fire of just vengeance by reason of our former sins—fed by the hand of these sacrilegious ruffians in the east, was spread from sea to sea. It destroyed the neighbouring cities and regions, and did not rest in its burning course until, having burnt up nearly the whole face of the island, it licked the Western Ocean with its red and cruel tongue. . . . All the 'colonies' were levelled to the ground by the frequent strokes of the battering ram, and all the inhabitants, with the overseers of the church, priests and people, were slaughtered, with swords flashing and flames crackling on every side. Terrible was it to see, in the midst of the streets, tops of towers torn from their lofty fittings, the stones of high



#### FIRST MENTION OF KING ARTHUR

'The Battle of Camlann, in which Arthur and Medraut (Mordred) fell'—so runs this entry in the *Annales Cambriae*. The two entries in the *Annales* and the passages in Nennius constitute the earliest mention of the British hero who for a time checked the Saxon invasion.

*British Museum*

walls, holy altars, fragments of bodies, covered with clotted blood, so that they seemed as if squeezed together in some ghastly wine press. There was no burial for the dead, save in the ruins of their homes, or the bellies of beasts and birds (with all reverence to the blessed souls, if indeed many such were found, which at that time were carried by the holy angels to Heaven).

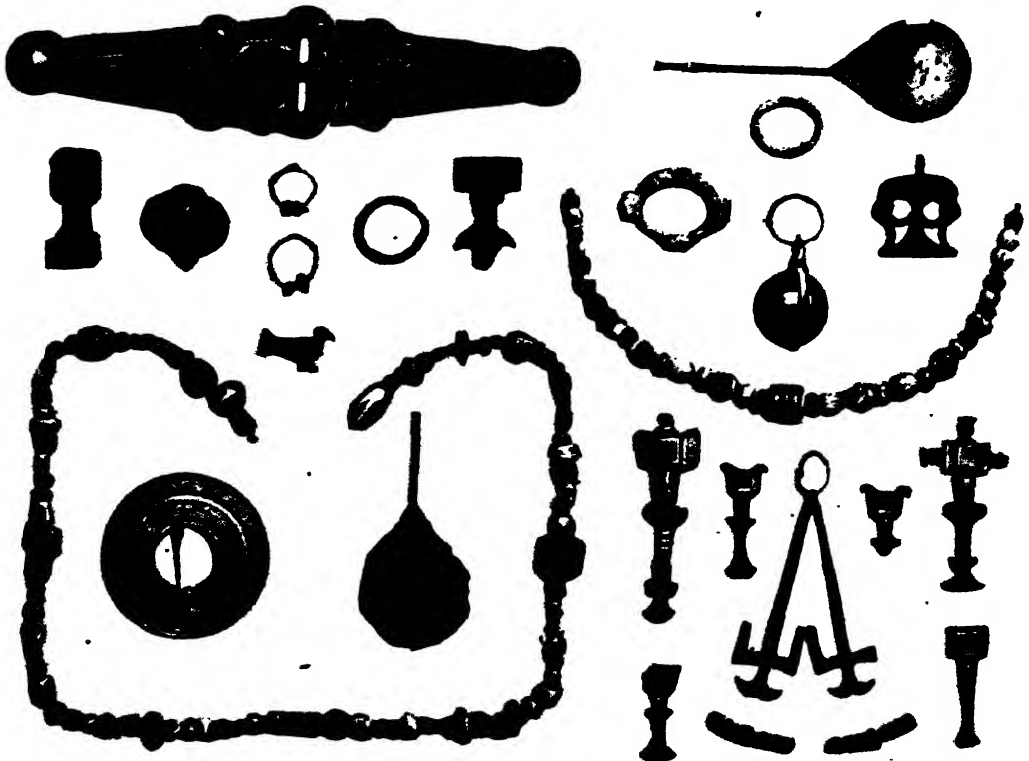
So some of the wretched remnant were caught in the mountains and all murdered there; others, forced by famine, surrendered, to be for ever the slaves of their foes, if indeed they were not slain on the spot—verily the greatest favour; others with great wailing sought the regions beyond the sea. . . . Others remained in their country, albeit with fear, and trusted their lives to hills and precipitous mountains, dense forests and crags by the sea. When some time had passed, and the most cruel of the plunderers had returned home, this remnant was strengthened by God. To them, from all sides, our wretched citizens flocked, as eagerly as bees when a storm is brewing. . . . Their leader was Ambrosius Aurelianus. . . . From that time sometimes our citizens, sometimes the enemy were victorious. . . . down to the year of the siege of Mount Badon. In that year took place almost the last slaughter of these gallows-birds, but by no means the least.

(Here, and in other places where I have occasion to quote from the original authorities, I have, with the permission of the publishers, Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., used the same translation as appears in my collection of sources for *England Before the Norman Conquest*.)

We do not know how the boundary was drawn in the time of Gildas between

the English and the British—or, as the English invaders called them, the Welsh. We have, however, an important means of knowing how it stood about a hundred years after the time of Gildas, when, in the middle of the seventh century, England as a whole was converted to Christianity. For this conversion meant a complete change in the burial customs of the English. Instead of burying the warrior in heathen cemeteries with spear and shield, and the woman with her gear, Christian modes of burial were substituted. Heathen Saxon cemeteries, therefore, in any English district mean that it had been settled by the Anglo-Saxons before the middle of the seventh century. Where such cemeteries are absent we must assume that, at that date, the Anglo-Saxons had not yet settled.

We naturally do not expect Cornwall or Devon to show any English finds of early date; it is more surprising that we find them almost completely absent from Dorset and Somerset, and even from much of Wiltshire. Not only Wales but all the counties of the Welsh border are at this date entirely un-Teutonised—Monmouth, Hereford, Shropshire, Cheshire. But those who trace Shakespeare's genius to a Celtic source should be warned that there is a steady line of Teutonic cemeteries stretching down both banks of the Warwickshire Avon almost to its junction with the Severn. Apart from this, however, both banks of the Severn are fairly untouched—much of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire is quite free from any trace of Teutonic settlement. In the north, Lancashire, Westmorland, Cumberland

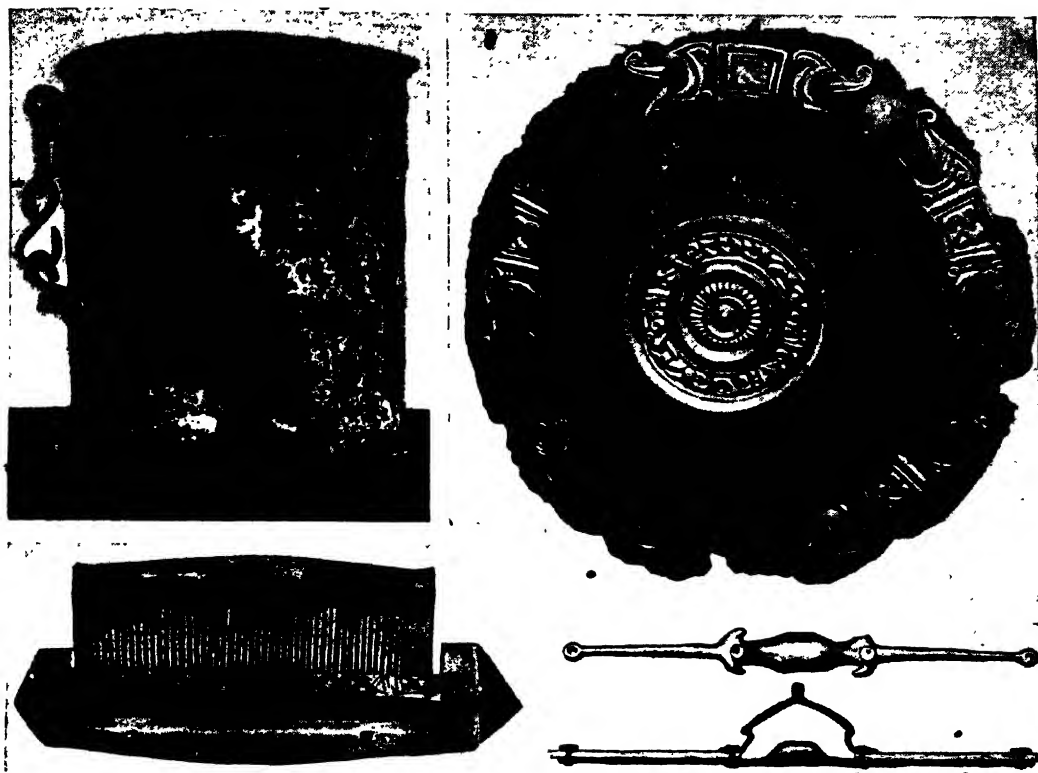


#### BUCKLES, FIBULAE, RINGS AND TRINKETS WORN BY THE PAGAN ENGLISH

Archaeologists might well deplore the conversion of the English to Christianity, for it put an end (c. 650) to the burying with the dead of weapons and gear. These specimens, all but the group in the lower right-hand corner, come from Kent and from Chessel Down in the Isle of Wight; though the localities are so widely separated, there is little to distinguish them (note the perforated spoons common to both), and indeed Bede tells us that both were settled by Jutes. The rest are quite different (note the girdle-hangers); they come from<sup>c</sup> Cambridgeshire, settled by Angles.

*British Museum*





#### TRAPPINGS OF ENGLISH WARRIORS AND THEIR LADIES

These are specimens of some of the finer objects yielded by excavation; only the iron shield boss from Bidford-on-Avon (top right) is unusual by reason of its sumptuous ornamentation of cast bronze plated with gold. Below it is a diagram showing the relation between shield, boss and handle. The other objects are a woman's bronze work-box from Kirby Underdale (top left) and a bone comb in a comb-case found at York. The comb and case are of Danish type and belong to the Viking period.

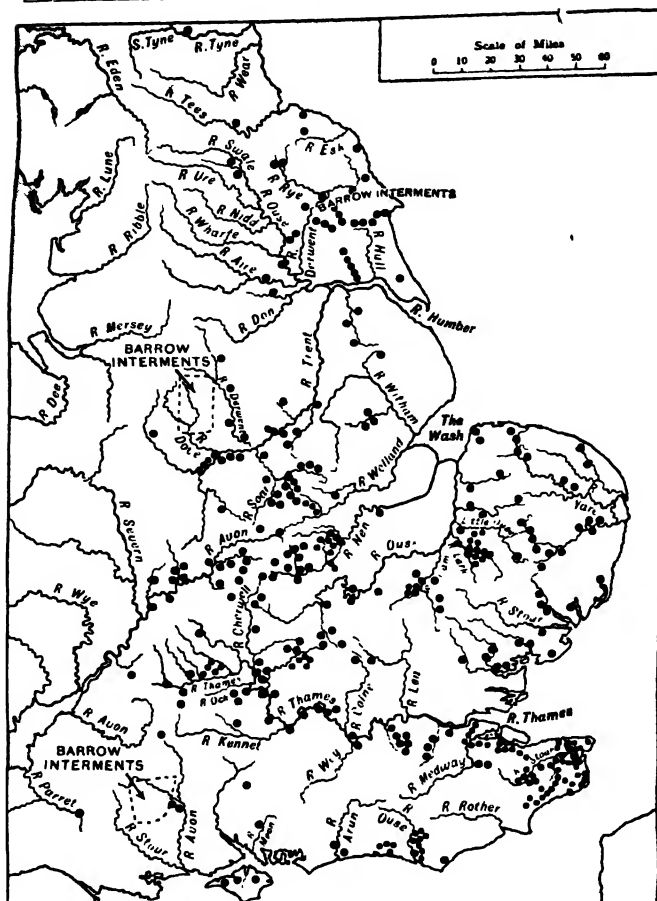
*British Museum and F. C. Wellstood*

and most of the West Riding of Yorkshire must have still been Celtic: we find no traces of any Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in those parts. (See the map in the following page.)

These northern districts were reserved for other conquerors—the older population was largely overlaid at a later date by Scandinavian invaders. But elsewhere it is reasonable to suppose that a very large element, derived from the inhabitants of Roman-British times, remained in the districts which have been noted as free from any trace of Anglo-Saxon settlements before the period of the conversion. It is true that when the invaders spread their conquest westward we hear of their sometimes rooting out the original inhabitants; but we also hear of cases where they left them as tributary.

Let us now turn to the eastern parts of England. Almost everywhere in these parts we find the cemeteries of heathen

times. Where they are absent, such absence seems attributable, not to a Roman-British element holding out in isolated independence, but to the fact that the land was uninhabited. Most of Sussex, Surrey, West Kent and Hampshire show no traces of settlement; there lay the Great Wood of Andred which the Chronicle of Alfred's time—with what must surely be some exaggeration—speaks of as being a hundred and twenty miles long and thirty broad. Middlesex, south-west Essex and Hertfordshire show a similar remarkable absence of settlements; there also lay the Great Wood of which men are seeking to-day to preserve remnants in Epping Forest, Ken Wood and elsewhere. And it is obvious that, in the yet undrained Fen Country, Angle invaders might be drowned, but could not be buried. But all along and above the rivers, where a dry subsoil offered satisfactory dwelling-places, we find traces of the one monument that



#### DISTRIBUTION OF PAGAN SAXON BURIALS

If the cessation of pagan burials robs us of archaeological material after A.D. 650, it also records how far the conquest had penetrated at that date. This map shows that whereas pre-Christian burials were numerous in the east and midlands, much of the south-west and all the north-west were then untouched.

From E. T. Leeds, *'Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements,'* Clarendon Press

the heathen English have left to posterity—these cemeteries.

This brings us to what has been called the 'fundamental controversy' of Anglo-Saxon history. Must we imagine all these districts to have been inhabited solely by Angles, Saxons or Jutes, as the case may be, who had rooted out the original Roman-British inhabitants? Or did the old population live on, serving their conquerors and intermarrying with them? Was the Anglo-Saxon conquest only a change of masters, and did the old cultivators of the soil remain a large element in the population? In the west, as we have seen, there is no doubt whatever that they did; but, so far as the bulk of England is con-

cerned, historians of weight have expressed the opinion that 'against the hypothesis that this was the general case, the English language and the names of English villages are the unanswered protest.'

On the other hand, many scholars have disputed this. Yet the argument from the English language is a hard one to meet. English, as we find it in the earliest Anglo-Saxon records, is surprisingly free from either Celtic or Latin admixture; and such Latin elements as we do meet are fairly clearly not to be traced to any mixture of the population in England. They are mostly words introduced by the Christian missionaries. There is, in addition, a very small and more ancient element of words borrowed from the Latin; but this borrowing seems often to have taken place before the English came to England at all; it is simply due to that knowledge of Roman things which spread among all the barbarians bordering on the Roman Empire, and is parallel to the undoubted fact that the arms and equipment which the English wore while they were still a tribe living on the Continent showed traces of Roman

influence. The primitive runic alphabet was itself no native invention—it was borrowed and adapted from the Mediterranean civilization. But this alphabet they continued to use while settled in England; we find no signs of writing after the fashion of the Roman world till the Christian missionaries introduced it.

Of course a people may change their language without very much admixture of foreign blood; Cornishmen speak English, although in Cornwall the old Celtic-speaking population certainly lived on without much English admixture. But we must not forget that such a change takes time, at any rate if it is to spread over large areas. Cornwall was conquered

in Anglo-Saxon times and annexed to the English crown, but even at the Reformation there was great discontent over the introduction of church services in English. 'We utterly refuse this new English,' said the Cornishmen. But English was forced upon them; and the church service, the Bible, commerce, the schools and the printing press gradually changed the speech of the county. Nevertheless, it was almost a thousand years after the date when English kings first began to hold and to grant estates in Cornwall that the last people died who spoke the old Cornish speech as a living language. It is arguable that, without any very overwhelming infusion of English blood, people in the eastern parts of this country might have come to speak English and reckon themselves Englishmen, but hardly in so very few generations as separate the latest era of Roman Britain from the earliest records of Saxon England.

The argument from place names is equally strong. In the east of England we find Celtic names for rivers and hills; but this proves nothing; for, even with a complete change of population, such names of natural features may live on:

Their name is on your waters and you cannot wash it out.

It is only when we get to the west, where, as we know, the old population did live on, that Celtic names begin to be common.

**The evidence of place names** They are so in Dorset and the adjoining parts of Wiltshire, and in Devon and Somerset. So with the Welsh border, and with Lancashire, Cumberland and Westmorland. The difference between the state of things in these counties and in the districts farther east must reflect a real difference in the character of the settlement. •

Of course there is no doubt that everywhere some, at least, of the old inhabitants survived. Names like Walworth, Walton, Walcot probably indicate settlements of 'Wealas' or 'Welsh'. Now, the word 'Welsh' in Old English is ambiguous: it may mean a Welshman, or it may mean a 'serf' or 'slave.' But these Welsh settlements were probably settlements of serfs who were also 'Welsh.' Similarly

'Britton' signifies a settlement of British. And such names are not uncommon—there are five 'Waltons' in Lancashire alone. Yet it might be argued that the mere fact that it was thought worth while to call a 'tun' by a special name because its inhabitants were Welsh only goes to prove that such cases must have been exceptional in that district.

It is when we come to the old English laws that we find the clearest instances of the existence of a population of slaves and serfs. We need not assume that this servile population first grew up in the English Slavery among the English England. If we read carefully the account given by Tacitus of the Germans on the Continent (see page 2217), it becomes clear that they were not that nation of free men, among whom slavery was all but unknown, that modern idealists have depicted. From the picture which Tacitus gives us, we learn that the tribesmen spend much time over their tribal business and assemblies, sitting always armed; the chieftains have large retinues of selected and warlike youths; these men despise labour: 'it is not so easy to persuade them to plough the earth and await a harvest as to challenge a foe and win honourable scars.' There are slaves, on the other hand, who occupy their own farms, paying their masters fixed sums in grain, cattle, clothing; yet these farmers are mere chattels whom the masters can kill, and do kill, in fits of rage, as they would their enemies; only, as Tacitus grimly says, they can kill these serfs with impunity.

Since, then, slavery was an institution with which the Angles and Saxons were quite familiar while still on the Continent, we should expect them, when they conquered England, to have come as a ruling aristocracy, taking over the Roman villa, with all its labourers, whom they could treat as serfs or slaves. Yet the fact remains that the English language and the names of English villages prove that what took place over the greater part of England was very much more than a mere change in the governing class.

Archaeological evidence supports the evidence of language and place names. 'The Anglo-Saxon cemeteries,' we are



#### SHIP SUCH AS THE SAXON RAIDERS USED

Long before migrating the Saxons systematically raided the British coasts, and the eastern districts were probably depopulated, leaving an almost empty land for reoccupation. The 'long keels' in which the raiders came were like this ship preserved in the mosses of Nydam, in their mainland home.

*From Engelhardt, 'Denmark in the Early Iron Age'*

told, 'seem to show an essential unity of race in all the Teutonised parts of the land.' Yet this essential unity, it must never be forgotten, stops long before we reach the boundaries of Wales or Cornwall—at the time when the heathen cemeteries ceased to be used, the Teutonic population had not, as we have seen, stretched very much more than half-way across the island. Nevertheless, in this eastern part of the island we find an Anglo-Saxon population, and this population seems to have been much more homogeneous than on a priori grounds we should have expected.

The easiest way to account for the difficulty is to keep in memory the distinction between two very different kinds of invasion. First came the marauding bands of Angles and Saxons, bent simply on plunder and massacre, destroying and robbing in districts where, as yet, it had never occurred to them that they might make permanent homes. And much later there were the bands of immigrants, bringing with them their wives, children and all their belongings, and bent on settling and tiling the land, no doubt with the help of any slaves they could get. But it is quite possible that, by the time this second mass immigration took place, many districts had been fairly thoroughly cleared, by the constant raids, of all their old inhabitants. After all, no man will plant a harvest unless there is some reasonable prospect of his reaping it; and common sense would lead a man who

had cattle or slaves to take them into some part of Britain where he might have a chance of keeping them safe from the raids which the Angles and Saxons were always making in their light boats, similar to the one which has been dug out from the moss of Nydam.

But, whatever may have been the proportion of the original inhabitants of Britain whom the Teutonic conquerors caught and kept among them as servile or semi-servile labourers, it is quite clear that neither in England nor in their previous life on the Continent did these Teutons constitute

that ideal democracy which historians once loved to depict. So far was kingship from being unknown among them, before their arrival in England, that we know the names of a whole dynasty which ruled over the English while they were still in Slesvig. And, it is worth noting, the king of England to-day can trace his descent to that dynasty, to kings who ruled over the English more than fifteen hundred years ago. Matthew Paris, the thirteenth-century historian and artist, has left us a picture of two of the dynasty's earliest kings, Offa and his father Wermund—the first English kings of whom we know anything definite.

The picture which John Richard Green draws of these 'self-governing' communities might well fill

the social reformer with despair, as he looks round upon the slow progress which England has made in the course of centuries. 'The bulk of the homesteads within the village,' Green tells us, 'were those of its freemen or "ceorls"; but amongst these were the larger homes of "eorls," or men distinguished among their fellows by noble blood, who were held in an hereditary reverence, and from whom the leaders of the village were chosen in wartime, or rulers in time of peace. But the choice was a purely voluntary one, and the man of noble blood enjoyed no legal privilege among his fellows.'

**Distorted view  
of Saxon 'freedom'**

It would be more correct to say that law was a system of legal privileges which the more noble and wealthy class possessed over the class or classes beneath them.

When Augustine and his fellow missionaries had introduced writing into the converted Kentish kingdom, one of the first uses to which it was put was to record this law. The Laws of Æthelbert (*Æthilberht*), as they are called, are valuable as indicating the state of society in seventh-century England. But they are not a

code; rather they are 'brief amending clauses, dealing with certain sides of the law, more particularly with the penalties for important crimes, and with the status of the clergy.' Behind this written law was a body of customary law which is supposed to be known; in its essence the invaders had brought it from their continental home. Subsequent laws of Kentish kings and other documents help us to get a clearer idea of Kentish society; and the Wessex laws, as recorded by Ine, king of the West Saxons, and many years later by Alfred, throw a light on the state of things in other parts of England.

We find a society in which the rich man, so long as his purse lasts, can do almost anything he wishes. For wrongs may be compensated by a money payment. Society falls into classes, graded according to the compensation, or 'wergeld,' which must be paid for slaying members of each class. These classes vary in detail in different parts of the kingdom, but the Kentish scale illustrates the principle.

At the top of the scale stand members of the princely house. The life of an 'ætheling,' or member of this class, is worth 1,500 shillings. We may reckon a shilling in Kent as about the value of a cow or an ox. Then comes the 'eorl'—the word, of course, is the same as our 'earl,' but we must not think of the ancient Kentish 'earl' as a noble; our term 'nobleman' would be more applicable to the

æthelings of the princely family. The old Kentish 'earl' corresponds to the modern squire. His life is worth 300 shillings. Then comes the 'ceorl,' by no means to be despised, though the word has sunk in modern English: it is our word 'churl.' They form the substantial yeomanry, and the life of each is valued at 100 shillings. Then come three classes of the semi-servile labourer or 'læt,' worth respectively 80, 60 and 40 shillings each. Finally come the slaves. And how numerous this class might be is shown by the fact that, when S. Wilfred converted Sussex, the estate which the king gave him at Selsey, for the foundation of his monastery, contained two hundred and fifty slaves. These slaves S. Wilfred, of course, immediately liberated.

Now, a very little thought will suffice to show that to speak of such a society as a 'farmer commonwealth,' in which all men are equal before the law, is absurd. The whole point is that men are unequal before the law. The cynic may say that men never are really equal before the law; and, no doubt, so long as any society is organized on a money-basis, the rich man will always have advantages over the poor. He can buy the best legal advice. But Anglo-Saxon law is based on the assumption that the rich man ought to have advantages over the poor; it artificially adds to the advantages which wealth automatically gives.



ENGLISH KINGS BEFORE THE INVASION

Kingship was well ingrained in the Anglo-Saxons, who knew little of the 'ideal democracy' sometimes assumed. They had known kingship even on the Continent, and a drawing by the thirteenth-century St. Albans monk, Matthew Paris, shows two pre-conquest Anglian monarchs, Wermund and his son Offa.

British Museum; Cotton MSS., Nero D. i

Let us take the law as it stands between two men in Kent who are not very far apart: the 'earl,' earl or squire, and the 'ceorl,' churl or yeoman. Their sons, we will suppose, are drinking at the ale-house; the better-born man gets outrageous, and quarrels with the son of the churl. The churl's son, knowing well enough the difference between them, forbears all he can, but at last it comes to a tussle, and they draw their swords. Suppose the earl's son kills the churl's son. It is a serious matter. His kin will have to pay a hundred cattle if they are to keep on the right side of the law; and perhaps the 'earl' is only a small squire whose whole estate is not worth more than a few hundred head of cattle.

We can imagine the father talking severely to his son: 'Only two years ago you killed a læt over by Hawkhurst. He was only the cheapest kind of læt, it is true, but it cost me forty cattle; and now I have got to raise another hundred.

It will cripple my estate for years. I give you fair warning, young man,' the stern father would conclude, 'that if you kill a third man, even though it is only a slave, I will pay nothing, and you will have to go abroad and take service where you can. I hear that Alboin is collecting men to invade Italy, and it would serve you right if I packed you off to join him. But I have always been a very indulgent father to you, and so I'll pay this time—but never again. Mark that well.'

But suppose, on the other hand, that the yeoman's son kills the squire's son. A squire, even a small squire, can raise money with the help of his kin, but it is a very different matter for a yeoman to collect the value of a hundred head of cattle. But, if our yeoman is to save the life of his son from the avenger of blood, he must pay, not one hundred, but three hundred cattle; for his son slew a young earl. It is no good the yeoman urging that his son was quite innocent, forbore all he could, and only drew his sword in self-defence, when he would have been killed if he had not done so. The answer of the better-born man would be: 'I know all that. If your son had been the aggressor

It would have had his life, his brother's life, and your life as well, as payment for the life of my son; it is only because I know that my son was in the wrong that I am agreeing to compound the feud by a money payment. Even so, I know I shall be blamed for it. But I am a man of reason, and sick of bloodshed.'

We will suppose that our yeoman raises the money among his kin. Very little time is allowed—twenty per cent. has to be paid 'at the open grave,'

before the slain man is buried, and the full payment must be made within

**Inequality of  
the Churl's lot**

six weeks. We will suppose that it is all raised: the value of a hundred shillings in coin and jewels, and two hundred cattle. So matters rest for a year, and then the old earl dies. After his funeral feast has been duly celebrated, the two surviving sons discuss the settlement of their affairs. 'Our father,' says the elder, 'has carried our dead brother in his purse these twelve months. What say you: shall we do so too?' 'No,' is the reply. So it is all fixed up before the separation of the kinsmen who have gathered for the funeral. A fortnight after, a dozen of them, well armed, meet by appointment at the young earl's homestead; they take from the chest the heavy purse, with its weight of silver and jewels worth a hundred shillings, and ride across at a gallop to the yeoman's farm. The son is ploughing. The dozen young earls seize him and strike off his head. They then ride on to his father's home, call out the old man, and fling the purse at his feet. 'There is the price of your son; you will find his body down by the stream.' So they ride home, and are entitled to keep the two hundred cattle, to mark the difference between the value of the life of an earl and the life of a churl.

The same principle runs right through. Suppose the fight to have ended with no more serious damage than a front tooth being knocked out. If the earl knocks out the churl's tooth, six shillings puts him right before the law; if it is the other way round, the churl will have to pay the earl eighteen shillings.

There are some offences, however, which are visited more severely on a great



#### BEAUTIES OF ANGLO-SAXON AND OTHER OLD ENGLISH JEWELRY

1 and 12 Inland brooches, the former from Kingston, Kent, the latter from Wingham, Kent. 2, 4 and 5 Jewels from The King's Field, Faversham, Kent. 3 and 11. Roman coins used as pendants, the former of Valentinian II, from Staffordshire, the latter of Herachus I, mounted reverse-forward and upside-down, from Norfolk. 6, 7 and 8. Side, front and back of a jewel found near Athelney: a figure in cloisonné enamel, with gold mount stating that it was ordered by Alfred (almost certainly Alfred the Great). 9 Gold buckle of Kentish type set with garnets and lapis lazuli from Taplow barrow (see page 2458). 10. Jewel from Kent.

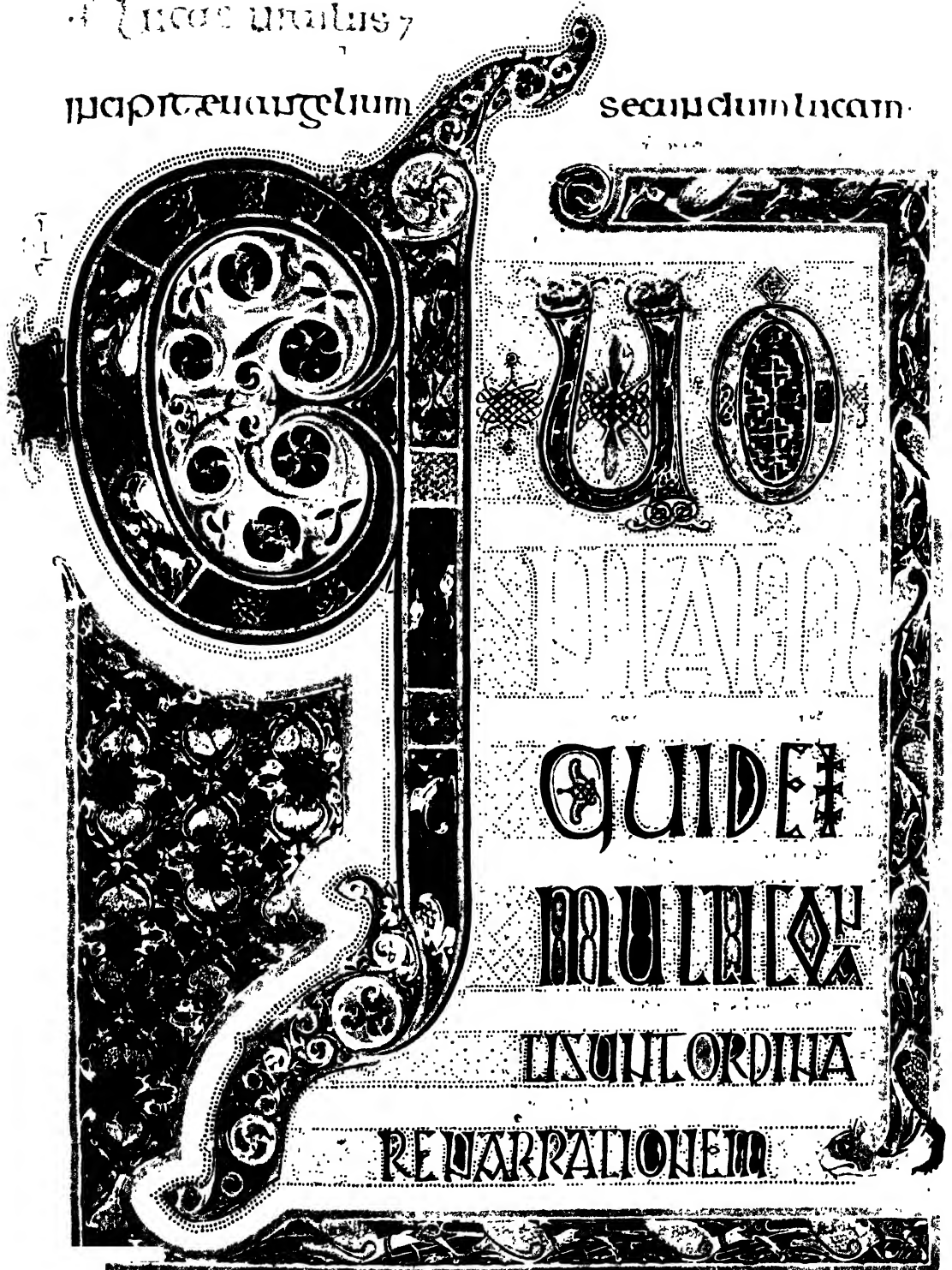
1. Liverpool Museum; rest, British Museum



7. Incoe unius 7

incipit euangelium

secundum lucam



SUPERB ILLUMINATION OF THE GOSPELS, PRODUCED AT LINDISFARNE

The love of colour shown in much continental Teutonic art (see page 2222) finds expression also in the work of heathen Kent and the much later Alfred Jewel, shown overleaf. A similar love of colour is shown in the Gospels illuminated in the early eighth century by Eadfrith at Lindisfarne, originally a Celtic-Irish foundation, the Celtic influence is obvious. Above is the first page of Luke, with a much later interlinear translation by one Aldred into Northumbrian

From E. G. Mearns, 'The Lindisfarne Gospels,' by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum

man than on a small one ; slander is one of these. The reason is that slander is punished, theoretically, by cutting out the culprit's tongue. In fact, the tongue is not cut out ; the culprit ransoms it, according to its price, which is one-third the price of his life. Now, just as an earl's life is worth three times the life of a churl, so is an earl's tongue worth three times the tongue of a churl ; and, if he utters slander with it, he finds it so to his cost.

But, generally, Germanic law was calculated to make things easy for the rich and hard for the poor. If you belonged to a

family well born, rich, athletic, numerous and  
**Rich favoured**  
**by Germanic law** above all, living on terms of friendship and mutual support, life must have been pleasant ; but hardly otherwise. If only there was enough land to take up, you were lucky when, like Hrut in the Icelandic Laxdale Saga, you had sixteen sons, and ten daughters whom you could marry to as many stalwart sons-in-law. Hrut once rode to the assembly with fourteen sons, all goodly men ; and a man would clearly think twice before he would quarrel with a family like that.

But if you were unfortunate enough to have no kin, or few, to stand by you, you might still enter into an artificial brotherhood. The Thanes' Guild at Cambridge was an association of this kind, and its rules have been preserved :

Here is, in this writing, the declaration of the agreement which this association has ordained in the Thanes' Guild in Cambridge. That then is first, that each should swear an oath of true faith to the other, upon the holy relics, in the sight of God and of the world ; and that all the association should ever support him who had the greatest right. If any guild-brother die, let all the guild bring him where he desired, and let him who comes not thereto pay a sester of honey. . . . And if then any guild-brother stand in need of the help of his fellows, and it be made known to the nearest guild-member . . . if that member neglect it, let him pay one pound. . . . And if anyone slay a guild-brother, let there be no atonement save eight pounds : but if the slayer scorn to make that atonement, let all the guild avenge their member, and all bear the feud. . . . And if any guild-brother slay a man . . . whose wergeld is 1,200 shillings . . . let each guild-brother contribute half a mark to his aid : if the slain be a churl, two oras : if

Welsh, one ora. But if the brother slay his man through folly and wantonness, let him bear what he has wrought. And if the brother slay his guild-brother through his own folly, let him bear with the kin of the slain that which he has violated : and let him buy back his membership of the guild with eight pounds, or else forever lack our fellowship and friendship. And if a brother eat or drink with one who slew his guild-brother (save it be in the presence of king, bishop or aldorman) let him pay a pound, unless his two comrades at table support him in denying that he knew the man to be the slayer. If any guild-brother insult another, let him pay a sester of honey, unless he can excuse himself with his two comrades at table. . . . And if any brother die, or fall sick, out of the land, let his guild-brethren fetch him, and bring him, dead or alive, where he desires, under the same penalty that has been said if he die at home, and the guild-brother attend not his corpse . . .

The rules of this Thanes' Guild belong to an age very much later than that of the Laws of Ethelbert. It is one of the great difficulties of the Anglo-Saxon period that our information is so scattered and is spread over so long a period. We have to piece together fragments of in-formation, and these fragments are not contemporary. From the landing of Hengest and Horsa to the landing of William the Conqueror is more than six centuries ; even from the time when the English were fairly well established in England to the Norman Conquest is about five centuries. Half-way through this period comes the beginning of the Danish invasions, which were directly to alter the character of half England and fundamentally affect the rest. We may think of the time before the Danish onslaught as the Earlier Anglo-Saxon period. The period of resistance to the Danes, the Later Anglo-Saxon age, is in many respects different.

From the Earlier Anglo-Saxon period we have two important sources of information : the Epic of Beowulf and the Ecclesiastical History of the Venerable Bede. Here we notice a great contrast between the remains of Anglo-Saxon civilization and of some other early epochs recorded in this History. For example, we have considerable material remains of the Early Etruscan age : massive walls and rock-cut



#### ANGLO-SAXON STONE WORK

The cross at Ruthwell (right) in Dumfriesshire has on it Gospel scenes and part of a poem, *The Dream of the Rood*, in runes. The broken shaft of that at Bewcastle, Cumberland, (left) perhaps commemorates Alhfrith son of Oswio.

*Photos, B. C. Clayton*

tombs; while what little Etruscan literature has survived has still to be deciphered. On the other hand, most of the material things produced by the old Northumbrian civilization have vanished; the halls with their carved woodwork were probably most beautiful, but no trace of them remains. Only in the two great crosses of Ruthwell and Bewcastle do we get any large material survival. But we can learn much from the books—*Beowulf* and *Bede*.

*Beowulf* gives a picture of how life was lived in the great houses: it is altogether aristocratic. *Beowulf*, unlike the *Odyssey*, ignores the life of the poorer folk. The period to which *Beowulf* belongs is probably that of the two or three generations

after the general conversion of the country, though we have no exact data. *Beowulf* is composed on a much smaller scale than the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, and the detail given in it is much less vivid; still, we get a clear picture.

*Beowulf* voyages from his home, in what is now Sweden, to visit the court of Hrothgar, king of the Danes; but, though the scene is placed in foreign lands, the detail, like the language, is English; the writer is drawing life as he knows it in his own country. It is not very different from the life of contemporary Scandinavia, but where there are differences they point clearly to England. We hear of roads paved with stone: the Romans had left such abundantly behind them in England. The king's wooden hall is spoken of as having a tessellated pavement: such pavements would be unknown in

Denmark, and we may doubt whether they were found in the Saxon halls of England;

but in England, where these pavements could be seen everywhere among the ruins of Roman cities and villas, they could easily be imagined as adding to the dignity of a king's house. In one place stone arches are mentioned: in Scandinavia these were still unknown, but prelates who had visited Rome were beginning to build churches in the grand manner in England. On the second day *Beowulf* and his fourteen companions see mountain-like promontories, the sea-cliffs of the land they are to visit gleaming in the sun: they could have seen, as they approached Denmark, only a gentle wooded land rising a little from the water; but the poet is perhaps thinking of the rugged Yorkshire coast.

• The coats of mail jingle as the crew fasten their ship; meantime the coast-guard watches, from the cliff above, the bright shields and goodly harness being carried over the gangway. He rides down to the shore, and after a long discourse is satisfied as to the good intentions of the newcomers. (He is more lucky in this than the coastguard of the West Saxon king who got news at Dorchester of the first three ships of Danish men who ever sought the land of England; that king's servant rode down and wished to drive

the Danes to the king's town, because he knew not who they were; but they slew him at Portland.) The watchman in Beowulf takes charge of the stranger's ship and hands it over to his guard; he himself escorts the newcomers along the road to the king's hall.

As they marched on, we are told, the gleaming and tempered helms, with their gilded boar-crests, glittered over the cheek-guards, till at last they saw the timbered hall, goodly and gold-adorned, before them. Here the coastguard leaves the visitors with a courteous farewell; when they arrive they lean their shields against the palace wall, pile their spears—the ashen wood with the grey metal at the tip—and sit down upon the bench outside. The proper official comes out, and again there is dialogue and explanation, and the official re-enters and with ceremony explains to the king the message of the strangers. In due course the guests are invited within—they are to leave spear and shield outside.

entering only with their swords and body armour. So the weapons are left behind—under guard, although it is a friendly visit—and again we have ceremonious dialogue and explanation, this time between the king and Beowulf. Then a bench is cleared, and the strangers join in the carousal.

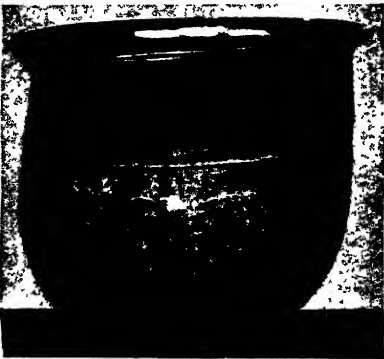
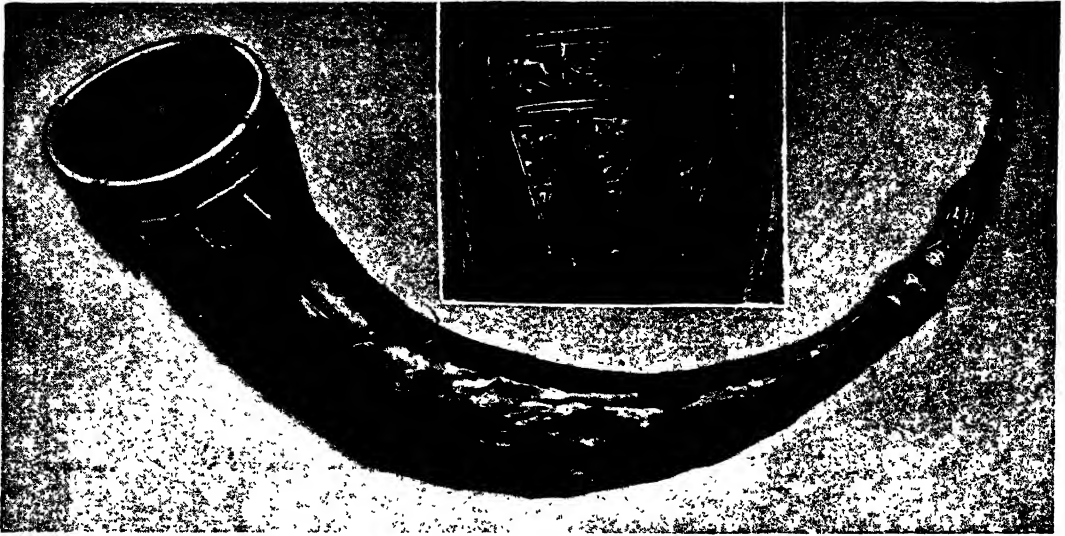
But the king's 'thyle,' or public orator, is jealous that these strangers should have come, volunteering to carry out a task beyond the power of the native-born. From his seat opposite Beowulf he taunts him, asserting that he holds him to be but a braggart, and that he has once before been put to shame. Beowulf gives a very different version of this incident in his earlier life, and the challenger is silenced and discomfited. Then the queen steps forward and offers the cup first to her



#### PAGAN MYTH AND CHRISTIAN HISTORY ON THE FRANKS CASKET

The 'Franks' casket is a splendid piece of Northumbrian carving dating from about 700. The plaques of whale's bone were joined with silver fittings and the whole was actually in use as a workbox in France as late as the eighteenth century. A panel of the lid (top), showing Egil, brother of Wayland the Smith, shooting arrows at attackers, illustrates the chain mail of the Beowulf period, while the back (capture of Jerusalem, by Titus) shows costume in general. The subjects are thus partly pagan and partly Christian; and they are accompanied by Latin as well as runic inscriptions.

*British Museum*



A burial mound at Taplow Court by the Thames is of such size (80 feet across and 15 feet high), and was found to contain such elaborate grave furniture, that it must belong to a great chief. One of the objects in it was this great drinking horn with rim-mounting and terminal of bronze; the former is enlarged above.



The capacity of the Teutonic races for their native beer is noticed by Tacitus and seems little abated to-day; while drinking cups and horns are common among Anglo-Saxon grave furniture. On the left are a glass vessel from Faversham (top), of unknown workmanship, probably Jutish, and a bronze stoup from Long Wittenham; in the centre a Taplow glass beaker; and, right, two small wooden buckets or cups bound with bronze from Bidford-on-Avon—one with a bronze handle.

#### VESSELS FROM WHICH THE CONQUERORS OF BRITAIN DRANK DEEP

*British Museum and F. C. Wellstood (bottom right)*

lord the king, and then in order down the hall, with special ceremony and words of welcome when she reaches the stranger chief. Meantime, at intervals, the clear-voiced minstrel has been singing.

So one might follow up the life depicted in the poem, till Beowulf returns victorious to the coast, claims his ship and parts from the coastguard after words of mutual courtesy, Beowulf giving the guard a sword bound round with gold in memory of his visit.

Another picture of a king's court is given us by Bede; but here it is grave deliberation that is depicted rather than the etiquette of receiving

**Bede's picture** knights from abroad.  
**of Edwin's court** Edwin, the great king of Northumbria, has long been hesitating whether or not to accept Christianity. He had vowed to do so if granted victory over his enemies; and victory had been granted. Paulinus, the missionary, warned him that he ought to delay no longer in carrying out his vow. The following is the Tudor translation of Thomas Stapleton, revised:

Which word when the king heard, he answered immediately both that he would, and also that he was bound, to receive this faith which Bishop Paulinus had preached and taught. 'But yet I think it good,' quoth he, 'first to confer and commune hereof with my friends and my "Witan": that, if they shall haply think herein as I do, then we may be christened all together in the fount of life.' Whereunto when Bishop Paulinus agreed, King Edwin calling the Witan together, consulted with them, and asked severally each of them what manner of doctrine this seemed to be, which until that day had never been heard of before, and how they liked the honour and worshipping of this new god which was preached now amongst them.

To whom Coifi, first of all his priests, answered: 'May it like your highness to prove and try well what manner of doctrine this is, which now is preached unto us. But this much shall I surely say, and, as I certainly know, protest and confess unto you, that the religion which unto this day we have ever observed and kept, hath no virtue nor goodness in it at all. For none of your grace's subjects hath been at any time more earnest and diligent in worshipping of our gods than I have been: and yet, notwithstanding, many of them have received of your grace's bounteousness more ample benefits than I have, and many of them have

been better prospered in all that they took in hand to do, or sought to get, than ever I was. But if the gods could ought have done, they would have rather holpen me, who at all times served them so duly. Wherefore it remaineth, that if these things which be now newly preached to us shall be found after good examination the better, and of more strength and steadfastness, that then without longer delay we hasten to receive and embrace them.'

To this persuasion of Coifi, another of the nobles consenting said: 'Such seemeth to me, dear sovereign, the life of men present here in earth (for the comparison of our uncertain time and days to live) as if a sparrow, beaten with wind and weather, should chance to fly in at one door of the hall, and flitting there a little about, straightway fly out at another, while your grace is at dinner in the presence of your aldormen and thanes; the hall itself being then pleasant and warm with a soft fire burning amidst thereof, but all places and ways abroad troubled with tempest, raging storms, winter winds, hail and snow. Now your grace considereth that this sparrow, while it was within the house, felt no smart of tempestuous wind or rain. But after the short space of this warm air, the poor bird escapeth your sight, and returneth from winter to winter again. So the life of man appeareth here in carth and is to be seen for a season: but what may or shall follow the same, or what hath gone before it, that surely know we not. Therefore if this new learning can inform us of any better surety, methinks it is worthy to be followed.'

Thus, or in like manner, said the rest of the aldormen and the king's counsellors, no doubt by the holy inspiration of God. . . But that I may be short, and come near my purpose, the king gave his full and plain consent to this holy man, Bishop Paulinus, willing him to preach the Gospel freely; and himself renouncing there all idolatry, promised that he would receive and embrace the faith of Christ. And demanding then of this beforesaid Coifi, priest of his sacrifices, who should first profane the altars and destroy the temples of idols with all the fences wherewith they were environed, 'Marry,' quoth he, 'I will. For who may better than I, which once by foolishness worshipped and highly esteemed them? Therefore to the good example of all others I will now myself, through the wisdom of God (that is one, only and true God) given unto me, beat down and utterly destroy the abomination of our temples.' So, forsaking in this wise all superstitious custom and vain dread, he besought the king to grant him harness and armour, and therewith a great courser and mighty courageous stallion horse, on which he mounted lustily, and with all speed rode forth to batter and beat down to the ground the idols. Now was it not



lawful for a priest of the sacrifices either to wear harness and armour or to ride on other than a mare. But Coifi made small count thereof. For being already well harnessed and strongly girded with a sword about his loins, sitting fast on the king's courser and stout stallion, he took also in his hand a spear, and so did march and set forth against the pernicious idol. Which sight when the people saw, they thought he had been mad. Yet he for all that stayed not, but as soon as he approached near the temple profaned it, casting therein the spear which he held in his hand, and, much rejoicing now because he knew the true worshipping of God, commanded the company which was there with him to destroy the temple, to fire the idolatrous altars, and break the fences that were thereabout. And truly the place where those idols sometime were is now to be seen, not far from York, to the east, beyond the river Derwent, and is at this present day called Godmundingaham [Goodmanham].

It is our misfortune that Anglo-Saxon literature did not produce those great prose histories which were preserved in Iceland under the name of 'sagas.' Bede, indeed, gives us the saga of the coming of Christianity, with many an incidental sidelight on English life; and Beowulf shows us what court life was like. But the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the most part gives us dry facts, without particulars. We can see that life in the service of

Anglo-Saxon kings must have been exciting; but the details are almost always lost. The throne was generally inherited from father to son; but from time to time an able and popular member of the royal house might jump a claim to the throne. How a king might forfeit his throne to a rival branch of the house by his own misbehaviour, and how his brother might try to win back the forfeited throne, we learn from one episode in the Chronicle. It is the one instance where, before the period of the Danish invasions, the Chronicle ceases to be a dry list of dates and names, and expands into detail which reminds us of the prose narrative of Iceland. It is a pity that we have not many more such passages:

[757]. In this year Cynewulf and the 'witan' of the West Saxons deprived Sigebryht (king of the West Saxons) of his kingdom for his unrighteous deeds, all save Hampshire; and that he held till he slew the aldorman who dwelt with him longest; and then Cynewulf drove him into the wood of Andred, and there he dwelt till a herdsman stabbed him at Privet; the herdsman did this to avenge the aldorman Cumbra.

And this Cynewulf often fought great battles against the Britons. And after he had ruled thirty-one winters, he wished to drive out an ætheling who was named Cyneheard; and this Cyneheard was the



JUSTICE DISPENSED BY THE KING AND HIS 'WITAN'

This king sitting in council surrounded by his 'witan,' or advisory body of experienced elders, calls to one's mind the scene described by Bede when Edwin of Northumbria accepted Christianity; the grim spectacle on the right, however, shows that it is justice that is being dispensed. Actually, what is shown is the execution of Pharaoh's chief baker, from an eleventh-century MS. of the version of parts of the Old Testament made by the same Ælfric who is mentioned in page 2468.

British Museum; Cotton MSS., Claudius B.10





Kentish kings in the excavation of 1924. It was not till seven years after the death of Mul, and after Kent had been ravaged again and again by Wessex, that the feud was finally settled. And it may be yet another echo of these troubles when, some fifteen years later, we find Kentish people trying to buy back their kinsfolk who had been carried off to slavery in Wessex. It is pleasant to find that one of the first letters on record exchanged between English ecclesiastics deals with such a work of mercy. The archbishop of Canterbury writes to the bishop of Sherborne; he is obviously nettled because a request made verbally to the abbot of Glastonbury has been forgotten:

... Because the request which, in thy presence, I made of the venerable abbot Beorwald, concerning the redemption of a slave girl, who has kinsfolk in our parts, has not had the success which I expected, and because I am again importuned by their prayers, I have deemed it best to send these letters to thee, by a kinsman of the girl, named, Eppa. And I beg of thee that thou wilt obtain from the foresaid abbot, that he will accept for the girl three hundred solidi from the hand of the bearer of these presents, and hand her over to him, to be escorted here, where she may pass the remainder of her life with her kinsfolk, no longer in the sadness of servitude, but in the joy of liberty.



KING ATTENDED BY HIS THEGNS

Caedmon was a mid-seventh-century Anglo-Saxon poet, and a metrical paraphrase of Genesis and other religious poems have been attributed to him with varying degrees of possibility. The extant manuscript dates from about the year 1000. This illustration (of Nimrod as a 'mighty hunter') shows in actual fact an Anglo-Saxon king with his 'inweorud' or 'comitatus' of thegns.

*By permission of Sir Israel Gollancz and the British Academy*

There is one law, found both in the Kentish Laws drawn up about this time, and in the contemporary Laws of the West Saxon king Ine, which perhaps reflects the state of things following this war between Kent and Wessex:

If a man from afar, or a stranger, travel through a wood off the path, and neither shout nor blow his horn, he may be assumed to be a thief, and as such either slain or put to ransom.

This law has often been quoted as showing the general insecurity of life and property in Saxon England. But possibly it was not at all times as bad as this; since the wording of this law is almost identical in the Kentish and Wessex Laws, we may suspect that it was adopted by mutual agreement, at the time of the peace, to stop raiding.

These laws of Ine give us many a hint of what life must have been like in Wessex about the time that Bede was writing his History in Northumbria and Beowulf was being composed. The Sabbath was observed with a strictness more severe than even that of Cromwellian times:

If a slave work on Sunday by his lord's command, he shall go free, and his lord shall pay 30 shillings fine. If, however, the slave work without his lord's knowledge, he shall be flogged, or pay the fine corresponding. But if a free man work on that day without his lord's command, he shall lose his freedom or pay 60 shillings; and a priest two-fold.

[The shilling in Wessex is only about one-fifth of the Kentish shilling: the price of a sheep against that of an ox.]

Robbery is cruelly punished: the thief captured red-handed is liable to death, though here, as nearly always, atonement can be made by a money payment:

If a thief be taken, he shall die the death; or his life shall be redeemed by his wergeld. . . .

The thief not actually

caught on the spot is less severely punished :

If anyone steal, so that his wife know it not, nor his children, he shall pay a fine of 60 shillings. But if his household know, they shall all go into slavery. A child of ten can be an accomplice in theft.

But there is a distinction between slavery at home and the selling of an Englishman oversea. Englishmen were sold abroad as slaves during the whole Anglo-Saxon period, and were perhaps a chief export of the country ; but in Christian times this slave trade in Englishmen by Englishmen was recognized as being against the laws of God and man :

If anyone sell oversea one of his own countrymen, bond or free, though he be guilty, he shall pay for it with his [own] wergeld, and make full atonement unto God.

Besides danger from thieves and from war, there was danger from raiding parties, whose activities ranked as intermediate between robbery and warfare. The numbers engaged made the difference :

We call men thieves up to the number of seven; from seven to thirty-five a gang; above thirty-five an army (' here ').

He who is accused of belonging to a ' gang ' shall clear himself with an oath of 120 hides, or pay the compensation corresponding.

This last regulation brings us to one of the customs of Saxon England which strike a modern as most strange. Not only was the life of a great man worth more than that of a humble man; the oath of a great man was worth more than that of a humble man. Oaths were valued according to a man's status: an oath of 120 hides means the combined oath of two important men, or of a corresponding number of less important people. That two important men would suffice is shown by the regulation :

A member of the king's household, if his wergeld is 1,200 shillings, and if he is a communicant, may swear for 60 hides.

[These, again, are West Saxon shillings.]

Such was the organization of Anglo-Saxon society before the Danish invasions.



**MUL'S ASHES PRESERVED BY HIS MURDERERS**

Excavations of S. Augustine's abbey at Canterbury in 1924 brought to light the ashes of that Mul of Wessex who, as we learn from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, was burnt by the men of Kent in 687. They gave him Christian burial among the tombs of their own kings, but the tomb now visible is modern.

*Photo, J. Charlton*

This society received a shock when, just before the eighth century closed, Scandinavian pirates crossed the North Sea and sacked Lindisfarne. Anglo-Saxon life, as it has been sketched above, may seem wanting in security; but the sudden onslaught from an unknown heathendom gave a new sense of danger, hitherto unexperienced. Alcuin the Northumbrian (see also page 2437) writes home from the court of Charles the Great, to condole with his countrymen :

Lo, it is almost three hundred and fifty years that we and our forefathers have dwelt in this fair land, and never has such a horror before appeared in Britain, such as we have just suffered from the heathen. It was not thought possible that they could have made such a voyage. Behold the church of S. Cuthbert sprinkled with the blood of the priests of Christ, robbed of all its ornaments. . . . In that place where, after the departure of Paulinus from York, the Christian faith had its beginning among us, there is the beginning of woe and calamity . . . Portents of this woe came before it . . . What signifies that rain of blood during Lent in the town of York ?

Like a true preacher, Alcuin improves the occasion. This disaster will teach the novices of Lindisfarne not to waste their time digging out foxes or chasing hares. How impious is it to follow foxes instead of following Christ ! Let them learn the sacred scriptures, and take to heart the example of the youthful diligence of Bede.

Fortunately that magnificent product of the art of Lindisfarne, the Gospels now in the British Museum (see plate facing page 2455), survived this Danish onslaught



NOAH'S ARK ON AN ANGLO-SAXON HULL

The fantastic superstructure of this vessel is Noah's Ark as conceived by the illustrator of the Caedmon MS.; but the hull, with its dragon prow and upcurving stern like a fish's tail, is typical of the ships in which the Danes and the seamen of Alfred fought their battles. It is the earliest representation of a Saxon ship showing how the chieftain steered it.

*By permission of Sir Israel Gollancz and the British Academy*

as they survived the more systematic vandalism of King Henry VIII.

But this first threat was not immediately followed up. For two generations the Scandinavian attack in force was postponed, and it was not till the boyhood of King Alfred that England was all harried and burnt up. Then, after the heathen men had been fought to a standstill by Alfred, the land again enjoyed peace, and we again get valuable light on life in England, though, as always, fragmentary. The Chronicle gives us fairly detailed accounts of the land fighting, and one thrilling account of a sea fight in an estuary on the south coast of England. Alfred's account of the state of learning in England, in a letter to his bishops, depicts vividly the decay which had set in, even before the great onslaught which had ruined civilization in England :

So utterly was learning fallen off in England that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their service books in English, or translate even a letter from Latin into English : and I ween that there were not many beyond the Humber. So few were there of them that I cannot remember even a single one south of the Thames when I succeeded to the kingdom. Thanks be to Almighty God that we have now any supply of teachers.

And so Alfred plans the re-establishment of learning :

... and that we bring it about (as we very easily may, with God's help, if we have peace) that all the youth which now is in England of free men who have wealth enough to be able to apply themselves to it be set to learning, so long as they are good for no other business, till the time that they can well read anything written in English ; let those who are to be taught further, and set apart for a higher office [holy orders], be taught further in Latin.

When things settle down again, under Alfred and the line of able descendants who succeeded him, we have to remember that the north and east of England are, to a great extent, inhabited by men of Scandinavian blood and speech. The distinction in religious belief disappears quickly—the 'heathen men' settled in England become Christian with remarkable facility and rapidity. But the difference in dialect and manners remained, and the England north of Watling Street, although it was gradually conquered politically by the kings of Alfred's house, continued to be in many ways a very different place from the less changed Saxon districts to the south.

Yet it is clear that, even in that Saxon south, society is likely to have been altered by such a convulsion as the Danish invasion, and that the weaker, poorer and less warlike classes are likely to have become more and more dependent upon the richer families, trained to warfare and wealthy enough to maintain able-bodied

fighting adherents. The laws of King Athelstan give the impression of a society governed much more strictly than had been the case of old by the king and the circle of aldormen, 'wise men' and warriors who surround him. We should gather from the laws of Athelstan that there is much less 'liberty' in the tenth century than there had been in the sixth or seventh (so far as we can reconstruct the society of the sixth and seventh centuries from the laws of Ethelbert of Kent and his successors).

But we must be very careful not to be misled by words. What is this 'liberty' which Englishmen are losing? Mainly the liberty of the strong man to knock on the head as many poor men as his family can afford to pay for. The local bully may now be dealt with in two ways. The king may begin to take an interest in his behaviour; or his poorer neighbours may commend themselves to some powerful lord who can stand up for them—though naturally there had at all times been certain limits to the tyranny of the powerful and well connected over the weak. However leniently murder was treated, theft had always been regarded as a crime.

The same anomaly (for in these days it seems to us an anomaly) has sometimes been found in the rough society of back-woodsman in more modern times. For theft always implied a moral stigma; slaying might, or might not, be morally justifiable. Yet, even in the case of theft, the principle of the wergeld, the price of a man's life, came in. Theft had been a capital offence, but we have seen that the culprit, if wealthy enough, could buy his life back from justice—though not invariably. For, as early Kentish laws show, the king, in Kent at any rate, might intervene, and insist upon having the life of the thief.

But, under the influence of Christianity, we see the growth of a feeling of the moral hideousness of crime. The later laws have a homiletic character which contrasts strangely with the matter-of-fact earlier documents. Instead of the terse 'For knocking out the eye: fifty shillings compensation,' we have reminders of a man's duty to God and his neighbour, and

of the fear of hell. More and more, crime is coming to be looked upon as an offence against God and the state, not merely against the sufferer and his family. Thus we read in the laws of King Athelstan:

If anyone be so rich and of such a powerful family that he cannot be restrained from theft and from supporting thieves, then, whoever he be, whether a noble or a commoner, he shall be led out of his country, with his wife and his children and all that he has, to whatsoever part of the kingdom that the king wishes. And he is never to return.

If the culprit returns he may be treated as a thief, and that treatment is drastic enough under those laws of Athelstan. He who persists in theft is not to be allowed to buy himself off, by payment of wergeld, 'whether he be a free-man or a slave, a noble or a commoner; if it be a woman, whether she be mistress or maid; whoever it may be, whether taken in the act or no.' Certain rights of sanctuary are allowed for a limited number of days, nine to three, according to the dignity of the protecting power; but when the time has expired the culprit must be produced; the man thief must then be killed, the woman thrown from a cliff or drowned.

But the regulations are most horrible regarding slaves. In the case of a male slave, eighty of his fellow slaves are to be collected and are to stone him to death; and if any of these involuntary executioners fail to hit the culprit three times, he is himself to be flogged three times. Finally these eighty wretched slaves are made to pay three pence each as compensation to the lord whose slave they have put to death. (For a slave, albeit the property of others, may own property himself.) Similarly in the case of a female slave: eighty of her fellow slaves must be collected, each bringing three logs, and must burn the culprit to death. Then, as in the case of the man slave, those who carry out the sentence have to compensate the master for the loss of the slave they have killed. It is worth noting, however, that a female slave is not thus punished for mere theft from her own master and mistress—it must have been theft from others.



#### BENEFACATION OF KING EDGAR SUPERBLY LIMNED

After Alfred's days there was a revival from the degradation caused by the earlier Danish invasions, and the most splendid illuminated manuscripts were produced in the century before the Norman conquest. This is the frontispiece of King Edgar's charter to New Minster or Hyde Abbey, Winchester, and shows the king presenting the document to Christ, between S. Peter and the Virgin Mary. Edgar was that king (944-975) who was fowed on the Dee by six vassal kings

*British Museum, Cotton MSS., Vespasian A. viii*



From these laws of Alfred's successors, Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred and Canute, the humours and horrors of Anglo-Saxon life can be amply illustrated. One of the most interesting laws points to the existence, in the reign of Edgar, nearly a thousand years ago, of the Saturday half holiday. The strict abstention from work on Sunday was, as we have seen, insisted upon quite early. The Laws of Edgar ordain that this Sunday rest must begin at midday on Saturday and last till dawn on Monday.

The renewed incursions of the Danes under Sweyn and Canute caused much misery, but they did not interrupt English civilization as the earlier incursions in Alfred's day had done. The monastic revival had been the greatest

feature of the time of King Edgar and of Dunstan; and it continued, despite wars and rumours of wars. Many documents, mostly connected with Winchester, survive to show with what amazing skill the art of book illumination was practised during the last century of the Anglo-Saxon epoch—the charters of Edgar and Canute, and the Benedictional of S. Ethelwold.

Archbishop Wulfstan gives us a rather lachrymose but very valuable picture of the sad state of things in his day. But we must be careful not to misinterpret this. Some of the things of which Wulfstan complains had been crying evils since the first English settlement; what is new is not the crime, but (perhaps)



#### ENGLISH ILLUMINATION AT ITS BEST

S. Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester from 963 to 984, had made for him by a monkish scribe called Godeman the Benedictional, or book of episcopal blessings, from which these two pages are taken. They show S. Etheldrida (top) and Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and are magnificent examples of illumination.

From Warner and Wilson, *The Benedictional of St. Athelwold*; courtesy of the Duke of Devonshire





TOWER OF A SAXON CHURCH

The tower of Sompting Church in Sussex is unique among pre-Norman buildings in England owing to its four gables. This type of tower, found on the Rhine and elsewhere in Germany, is known as the 'German helm.'

*Photo, B. C. Clayton*

the moral indignation which declares that such a crime must no longer be :

Innocent men have been sold out of this land into the power of strangers, and small children for a little theft often in this land have been sold into slavery through cruel and wicked laws; and the right of the free-man has been destroyed and the right of the thrall impaired, and alms-right diminished. Free men may not be their own masters, nor go where they will, nor do with their own what they will; and thralls may not have what they own, earned with their labour in their own time, nor what for the grace of God good men have granted to them, and have given as alms for the love of God. But every alms-duty, which for the grace of God men are in right bound willingly to pay, every man diminishes and holds back. . . .

Father has sold his child for money, and son his mother, and brother has sold brother out of the kingdom into the hands of strangers: and all these are deeds great and terrible, let him who will understand.

Wulfstan, a patriotic Englishman, is disgusted at the confusion of all rank and order which the Viking incursions have brought about, so that a runaway thrall, turned Viking, ranks higher than his former master :

And lo ! how can greater shame, through the anger of God, happen unto men than doth oftentimes unto us for our own deserts ? If a thrall runs away from his lord, leaves Christendom and becomes a Viking, and afterwards it happens that the runaway thrall and his master fight : if the thrall slays the thane, there is no compensation to be paid to any of the thane's kindred ; but if the thane slay the thrall who was once his own, he must pay for him the price of a thane. Base laws and shameful exactions through the wrath of God are common among us, let him understand who can. . . .

Often do two shipmen, or sometimes three, drive a drove of Christian men from sea to sea through this country, bound together—a public shame to all of us, if we verily were capable of shame, or could at all rightly understand.

But the abundant Anglo-Saxon manuscripts prove that, in the midst of all this lawlessness and national humiliation, the monastic house continued

to be a centre of art and civilization. The most striking thing about these later Danish invasions is the rapidity with which the invaders assimilate Christianity and begin to endow the minsters which their ancestors would have burned—nay, which they themselves would have burned not many years before. Canute changes rapidly from a wild young barbarian to a model of naïve piety, though we can sometimes see traces of the former wild barbarian peeping forth from beneath the trappings of civilization.

A picture of the ordinary life of this period can be got from the Colloquy of Ælfric, one of the learned men of the monastic revival. This little work was written to teach boys the elements of Latin. It begins by the scholar coming to the master to be taught, willing even to be flogged if that is necessary. The scholar brings with him a number of companions

of different callings ; the discourse which each of these has, in turn, with the master enables Ælfric to bring in a large number of words. The Latin text, with the help of an interlinear translation into Anglo-Saxon, thus introduces the reader to a vocabulary of the things of everyday life. But to us the value lies in the little pictures that it gives us of such everyday life : the shepherd watching against the wolves with his dogs ; the ox-herd standing sentinel all night lest his oxen should be taken by thieves ; the king's huntsman, with horse and bracelet which the king has given him. The huntsman shows that, even towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, we have still an England in which game is so plentiful that servants are kept not merely to preserve, but to kill, harts, roes and boars. The fisherman tells of his catch, but refuses to put to sea with the whale hunters, because that is too dangerous a calling ; the fowler catches his birds by nets, snares, lime, whistling and the use of hawks, letting his hawks fly in the spring, and taming and training young ones in the autumn rather than keep the old birds through the summer ; the merchant brings purple garments and silk, gems and gold, fine clothing and spices, wine and oil, ivory and brass, copper and tin, sulphur and glass. So we run through all the callings, but the most interesting of all is the one most fundamental in Anglo-Saxon society, that of the ploughman :

'What dost thou say, ploughman ? How dost thou go about thy work ?'

'Lo, my lord, hard work have I. I go at daybreak urging my oxen to the field, and I yoke them to the plough. However stark the winter, I dare not lurk at home, for fear of my lord. But when the oxen are yoked, and the share and the coulter are fastened to the plough, each day I must plough a full acre, or more.'

'Hast thou any comrade ?'

'I have a boy, urging on the

oxen with the goad, who, too, is now hoarse with cold and shouting.'

'What else dost thou do ?'

'Verily, I do still more. I must fill the mangers of the oxen with hay, and water them, and bear out their dung.'

'Oh ! Oh ! Great work it is !'

'Yea, Sir, great work it is, for I am not free.'

Of London itself during most of this period we know strangely little. We have no record of when, or how, Roman London fell into the hands of the Saxon invaders. But we know that its reputation as a metropolis was such that, after Gregory had sent his missionaries from Rome, he planned London and York as the seats of the two archbishops, each with twelve bishops under him. It was seven years after his landing in Kent that Augustine sent Mellitus across the Thames ; and Augustine's patron, Ethelbert of Kent, built S. Paul's in London—a town, says Bede, which is a great emporium of



COMPLETEST SAXON BUILDING IN ENGLAND

There is no more complete example of Saxon building than the little church at Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire. It may possibly be the original church of the monastery built by S. Aldhelm before 709 ; on the other hand, according to some authorities, it may be a later restoration of about 975.

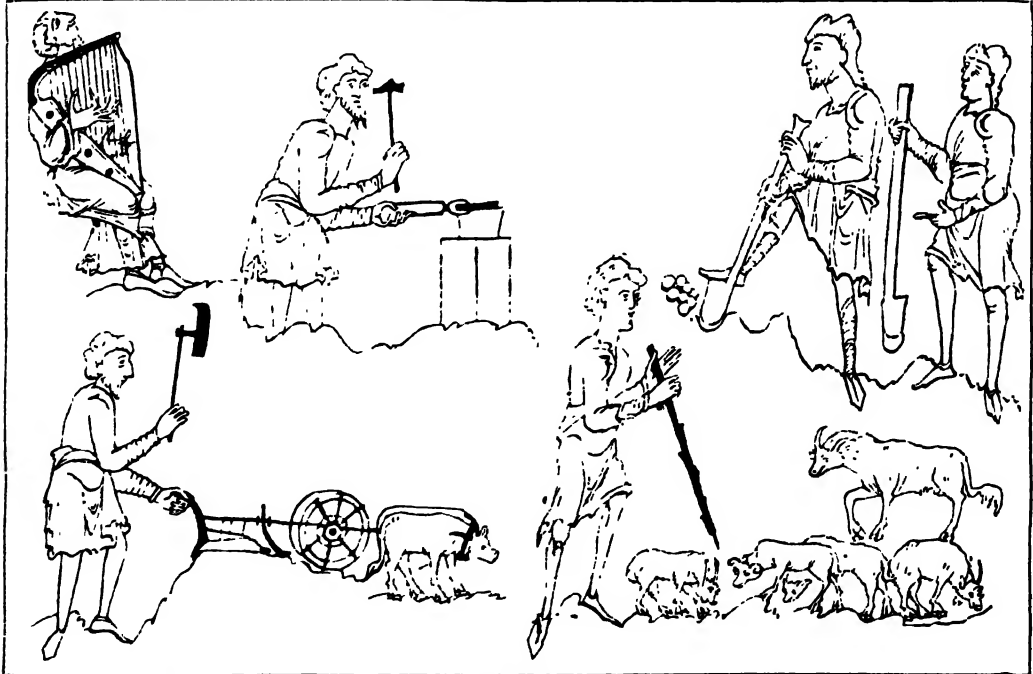
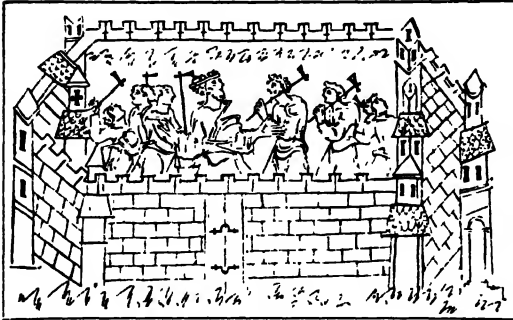
Photo, Herbert Fellen

many nations resorting to it by sea and by land. But the Londoners were devoted to their old religion, and relapsed into heathendom when the powerful king Ethelbert was no longer alive to compel them to be Christians; hence it is that London lost the opportunity of becoming the spiritual centre of the southern part of the island.

It remained a commercial centre, and, centuries later, after Alfred had won it back from the Danes, who held it for a short time, it became a military centre. In both these capacities it was very im-

portant at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period: it was the one place from the walls of which the Danes were always repulsed with disaster, even in the days of Ethelred the Unready; and, as we know from Ethelred's laws, it was a resort of merchants of Rouen selling wine and blubber-fish, of men from France and Flanders, and subjects of the emperor. But it was not until the days of the Confessor that Westminster became a great religious house. London was secular, and has therefore left little trace, for it is to the religious centres that we have to look for the survival of most of the monuments which have come down from the England of the Christian Saxon period.

Saxon London was a town of wood, and has left no such memorials of itself as even the Roman London which preceded it, or the Norman town which followed it. The chief charm of Saxon and Danish London must have been its shipping, 'bright with banner and shield and dragon-prow.'



#### SAXONS IN THE CITY, THE SMITHY AND THE OPEN FIELDS

In a series of scenes intended to illustrate the early chapters of Genesis the Caedmon MS. actually affords us a fascinating glimpse of Anglo-Saxon domestic and agricultural life. We see just such a harpist as must have chanted Beowulf to the court (Jubal), and a smith at his anvil who would do equally well for Wayland (Tubal Cain). Cain, the 'tiller of the ground,' and Abel, the 'keeper of sheep,' are the typical husbandmen of any Anglo-Saxon farm. Top, warriors in a walled town.

*By permission of Sir Israel Gollancz and the British Academy*

## SPREAD OF THE SLAVONIC FOLK

Their Antecedents and early Culture and how they  
made their first Entry into recorded History

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ON all counts it is unfortunate that the Slavs are one of the many nations of whom comparatively little is known in ancient times. The annals of Slavonic history are sparser even than those of the Celts, a nation whose extensive migrations and conquests of a few centuries earlier are somewhat analogous. Starting from a comparatively small centre, both nations had within a few hundred years so vastly extended their original habitat that their tribes were scattered over nearly the whole of central Europe, from the North Sea to Asia Minor.

With the one people as with the other, early records are entirely non-existent, and scholars are dependent either on the scanty indications furnished by classical historians and geographers or on linguistic and archaeological evidence. Yet, however obscure are the vicissitudes of the Celts in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era, Slavonic fortunes are still more obscure during the time of the Byzantines. There is no writer who gives for the Slavs so valuable and detailed a description as Julius Caesar's account of the Gauls and their valiant struggles under Vercingetorix, nor is there anything comparable to S. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, one of the most outlying of all Celtic tribes.

Although we have very little direct testimony as to the history, mode of life, civilization, habitat and language of the Slavs of some fifteen hundred years ago, we have much indirect information; a careful examination of the evidence available enables us to reconstruct with more or less accuracy a picture of the life of that time.

Before tracing out Slavonic history when the peoples whom we now know as Russians

and Ukrainians, Serbo-Croats, Slovenes and Bulgarians, Poles, Czechoslovaks and Wends were still undivided, it will be well to cast a rapid glance over what the ancients have to tell us of the Slavs.

There are no certain references to peoples whom we can identify as Slavs before the beginning of the Christian era; though with some likelihood scholars have identified the Neuroi mentioned by Herodotus in the fourth book of his history as the ancestors of the Slavs. We are told that the territory to the north of the Neuroi was desolate and that to the south peopled by a branch of the Scythians. Now, although the ancestry of these Scythians cannot be determined with any certainty, very plausible reasons have been adduced by a learned Czech scholar, Professor Niederle of Prague, which make it likely that they may be located in the river basins of the Dnieper and Don, in an area roughly equivalent to the modern Chersonese. It would seem that the land of the Neuroi was situated on the far side of the Pripet, a tributary of the Dnieper, and in the Rokytno swamps.

It is probable, moreover, that the old name of these Neuroi still survives in the town of Nur, which is about a hundred miles east of Warsaw, in the river Nurzec, a small tributary of the Bug, and in some other place names. There is, indeed, a district in Poland called Ziemia Nurska or Nur Land, and if we can equate this form Nur with the Neuroi of Herodotus—and philologically this is possible—Niederle's argument would seem to have been clinched. The whole nomenclature of the rivers of this area is undeniably Slavonic, while farther to the north of the Pripet we have names which are not Slavonic but Lithuanian in character.



#### BAPTISM OF A SLAV CONVERT

In A.D. 863, at the request of their prince, Rastislav, Methodius was sent from Constantinople to convert the Slavs of Moravia to Christianity; he is here seen baptising one. Archbishop of Syrmia (Sirmium) in Pannonia, his province covered the basins of the Raab, Drave and Save.

*From a painting in the vaults of S. Clemente, Rome*

The next classical writers to tell us anything definite of the north-eastern peoples of Europe are Pliny, Tacitus and the geographer Ptolemy, all of whom wrote in the first and second centuries after Christ. Their evidence is difficult to appraise at its right value, and in view of the number of peoples mentioned—none of whom can be located with any certainty—we are hardly in a position to give precise geographical data.

The name under which the Slavs of this time appear is Veneti or Venedi. The origin of this name is disputed—there are grounds for believing that it is ultimately Celtic, and that it has affinities with the word meaning 'white,' which we also have in Vindobona, i.e. Vienna, and it is still quite commonly used in reference to various sections of the Slavs. Not only are there the Wends of Lusatia, who in their own language call themselves Sorbs (a variant of the word Serb); but the Slovenes, one of the branches of the

triune kingdom of the Yugoslavs, have long been known to the Austrians as Winden. The Finnish name for Russia is Venäa, which means Wendish. There is thus evidence that the southern, western and north-eastern divisions of the Slavs have at one time all known the national name recorded by early classical writers.

The only surprising feature is that the name Wend is not used by any of the Slavs in speaking of themselves. That this is not an insuperable difficulty is proved by the parallel absence to-day in Germany of tribal names equivalent to the French 'allemand' or the English 'German.' In a similar way the old names Latinus or Romanus have been almost entirely ousted among the different Romance-speaking peoples by such territorial or foreign names as Spanish, Italian or French. Only the Rumanians, the speakers of Ladin or Romansch in Switzerland, and the Balkan Spanish Jews, whose liturgical language is called Ladino, have preserved the old names.

The words Slav and Slavonic do not appear until the beginning of the sixth century, if we omit the doubtful possibility that Ptolemy's Suoenoi is a corrupt form of the name.

To-day the word is restricted to the Slovenes, Slovaks and the inhabitants of a few villages near the Leba lake on the Baltic, some distance west of Danzig. It was, however, earlier used of the Slavs of Novgorod in Russia, of the inhabitants of Bohemia, Lusatia and the Dalmatian coast, and especially of those Slavs of Macedonia who were converted to Christianity in the ninth century by Cyril and Methodius. The 'Slavonic' (Slověnskū) language was formerly used to denote the speech of all the Slavs, and, in all their literary languages, the word is still known.

Much patient and ingenious effort has been expended by scholars in their search to determine the origin of this name. Centuries ago it was brought into connexion with 'slava,' meaning glory, and the Slavs were held to be the glorious, famous people. At a later date it was thought that there was a relationship between Slav and 'slovo,' a word.

Origin of the  
name 'Slavonic'

Support for this hypothesis was found in the fact that the general Slavonic word for a German, the neighbour of nearly all the branches of the Slavs, is *Němici*, which has been interpreted as originally meaning dumb. According to this theory, the Slavs were the speakers of an intelligent language as opposed to unintelligible, 'dumb' gibberers.

A more likely theory is that Slav was originally the second element in compound names, like *Rastislav*, *Svĕtoslav*, and, being exceedingly frequent and afterwards used alone, came to be the name in general of all Slavonic speakers.

The Latin and Greek forms of the word often begin with 'skl-', the nearest imitation of the initial consonantic group 'sl-' which classical tongues could manage, and it is from this form with 'skl-' that the earlier Italian, German and Albanian names for Slav are derived.

It may be noted that the word 'slave' is ultimately the same as Slav. As the Slavs were gradually driven out of Germany, large numbers were captured by the Germans and made to work as slaves (in German, *Sklaven*). There is no similar connexion, however, between Serb and 'serf,' Latin 'servus.' In order to avoid any misunderstanding on this head, the Serbians during the war asked their allies that the earlier spelling of their name with a 'v' should be replaced by that now universal in England.

The name *Antai* or *Antes* appears to have designated in ancient times the eastern branch of the Slavs. No certain survival of it has yet been found, and it was subsequently given up in favour of the Scandinavian designation 'Ros' or 'Rus' for the country now known to us as Russia. We have already seen that Serb and Sorb, which are the names of two widely separated Slavonic communities, may lay claim to having once been tribal names enjoying a wider extension than they have to-day.

The names of the other Slavonic peoples—Poles (meaning inhabitants of the plains), Bulgars (originally a Slavicised Turko-Tatar tribe from the neighbourhood of the Volga), Czechs (the derivation

of which is uncertain), Croats (a name which occurs in various forms), and the now extinct Pomeranian, or coastal, and Polabian or Elbe Slavs—do not concern us here.

Returning now to the accounts of the ancients, we are told by Pliny that the *Venedi* were reputed to inhabit territory extending up to the river *Vistula*; by Tacitus that he is doubtful whether or not to classify the *Veneti* as belonging to the Teutons—a view to which he inclines; and by Ptolemy that the *Venedai*, who formed part of the mighty nations of *Sarmatia*, occupied the area lying between the *Venedic* gulf (thought to be the Baltic ocean) and the *Venedic* mountains (identified as the *Carpathians*).

It is hardly open to doubt that the *Veneti* are the same people afterwards known to historians as Slavs. *Jordanes*, a sixth-century historian, uses the two names as equivalent to each other.

The district along the immense stretches of the river *Vistula* is thickly populated by the *Venetae*. Their name . . . changes amongst the various tribes and in different places, but its chief forms are *Sclavini* and *Antes*.

Some scholars have denied that the *Veneti* were Slavs and have adduced philological arguments to prove that they were Celts. Even if they really once were Celts it may be regarded as certain that by the sixth century they had become wholly Slavicised in language and culture and were felt by themselves and by their neighbours to be pure Slavs.

The indications provided by the ancients are too slight to make a satisfactory reconstruction of the borders of the Slavonic territory possible. The evidence of place names and of the linguistic connexions of the Slavs with other peoples must be called to our aid. We may also draw upon later Slavonic traditions and our knowledge of the territory of the Slavs in the tenth century.

The Slavonic languages form a well defined group in the great Indo-European or Aryan family. In vocabulary, grammar and syntax they are considerably more archaic than almost all other groups for which we have historical records of the

same period. Although to-day their literary languages are numerous and have differentiated considerably, as late as fifteen hundred years ago the Slavs all spoke a common language with hardly any dialectical differentiation. Quoted in the earliest forms, the following words are at once recognizable by all who know Latin and Greek, two other cognate languages of the same family: 'bratrŭ,' brother; 'synŭ,' son; 'mater-,' mother; 'nosŭ,' nose; 'borda,' beard; 'domŭ,' house; 'derwo,' tree; 'dŭwa,' two; 'triġe,' three; 'pi,' drink; 'ĕd,' eat; 'vidĕ,' see; 'sedĕ,' sit; 'sta,' stand. The endings of the present tense of such a verb as 'ber-' (bear) present a remarkable agreement with those of the corresponding Sanskrit verb.

The vocabulary is not wholly native Slavonic. Some words were at an early date incorporated from the language of Iranian peoples. There are also loans from an early form of Germanic, and there seems to have been, from the most remote times, a linguistic development common to Slavonic and Baltic, the ancestor of Lithuanian and Lettish.

As the original boundaries of these peoples, the Balts, the Teutons and the Iranians, can in part be established moderately well, we are in a position to say something of the one-time habitat of the Slavs themselves. It is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter to do more than outline, without proof, the extension of the Slavs at the period when they were beginning to radiate into three groups and to extend southwards, westwards and eastwards.

To the south the Carpathians at first afforded a natural barrier, exceedingly difficult to cross, and for some centuries after the Christian era the great bulk of the Slavs were still to the north of the range. It is safe to say that in the west the Vistula was the limit attained in this early period. The eastern boundary is quite uncertain. Not only was the Volga certainly Finnish (using the word in a broader sense than is now customary), and doubtless also the Don area, but Moscow, too, was Finnish. The Dnieper in its middle course was essentially Slav,

as were also the districts round the rivers Pripet, Berezina and Desna, all of which are Slavonic names. To the north the Baltic Lithuanians held the basins of the Niemen and the Dvina. The Slavs quickly narrowed down the territory of the Balts, and by the ninth century had fully established themselves in the neighbourhood of Lake Ilmen, with Novgorod—significantly meaning Newtown—as their centre.

In modern geographical terms, the area inhabited by the Slavs before they began to spread is, therefore, that part of Poland which before the Great War was called Russian Poland, together with the south of White Russia and the north of Ukraina or Little Russia.

What kind of country was that in which the ancestors of the present Slavs dwelt? In general character it was presumably much the same as Poland and European Russia of to-day, but with more marshes and woods; the conditions of life were harder and communication with the outside world was more restricted. The dense forests were haunted by many wild animals which have to-day largely disappeared; not only the bear, the wolf and the lynx, but also the aurochs and the buffalo were familiar beasts. The cold in winter was intense, possibly more so than to-day, though it should not be forgotten that even now in Kovno to the north and in Kiev to the south of Old Russia the rivers are ice-bound for a hundred days.

The Slav of those days was hardy, able to endure the extremes of cold, heat and hunger. He was more predominantly fair or sandy than he is now, and probably also taller. He was doubtless physically dirty, and when he washed he used not soap, but some kind of milk fat. He lived on a simple vegetarian diet, and was unfamiliar with the dainty ways of cooking and dressing foods in which the refined Byzantine indulged. On feast days he was a great eater and carouser, and his hospitality was unstinted and proverbial.

His clothing was simple—hemp, flax and the skins of animals being the materials used. A collection of underground caves or huts, the tops protected by sods or

**Former habitat  
of the Slavs**

**General character  
of their country**



manure and the sides made of wattles and baked clay, made a village which was protected from the assault of enemies by a wooden or earthen rampart. The political institutions were exceedingly democratic, though tribal feuds were frequent. Family life was severely simple and patriarchal. The head of the family was the despotic master not only of his own wife and children but also of his sons' wives and children. If a woman was widowed she was expected to allow herself to be done to death and burnt on the same funeral pyre as her husband. Trading was confined to barter, and articles of luxury rarely found their way into the boggy Slavonic fastnesses.

That the Slavs were exceedingly numerous we have already seen. They were probably then, as they still are, very prolific, and it is little wonder that they early began to feel the need of enlarging their territory and spreading to those countries where geographical obstacles were slightest and where the possibility of making easy conquests and enjoying pleasant conditions of life was greatest.

One of the main directions which the great Slavonic treks took was to the south, towards Byzantium, the store-house of the fabled Eastern riches, the centre of trade, civilization and luxury. The only way in which big numbers could reach the south was by the two ends of the Carpathian mountain range, leading to the Balkans and to the Alpine regions.

It is with the drive to the south that this chapter is concerned. Now, although the presence of Slavs south of the Carpathians is not historically attested before the sixth century, when Jordanes in his history of the Goths (551) tells



#### EXPANSION OF THE SLAVONIC PEOPLES

The Neuroi, in what is now Poland and European Russia, seem to have been the parent stock of the Slavonic peoples. Known later as Veneti, they spread from the Baltic to the Carpathians. In the sixth century a southward migration began and gradually overran the whole of the Balkan peninsula.

us that they were to be found at the mouths of the Danube and of the Save, and extended as far as the Dniester, there is some support for the theory that isolated outposts had reached parts at least of the Danube before the second century. Whether this be true or not, Slavs certainly began to filter into trans-Carpathian districts soon after. Julianus Capitolinus tells us expressly that there was a southward drive of barbarians from the north, and it has been held that Slavs were part of these barbarians. The time to which he refers is the end of the second century,

when Marcus Aurelius was on the throne. The Slavonic movements would seem to be connected with the Teutonic 'migrations of peoples' of this period, but it is unlikely that it was not until the Teutons evacuated Germania and Hungary that the Slavs decided to swoop down and occupy these rich countries which had become suddenly deserted. To account for the indubitable presence in the sixth century of great Slavonic masses over an immense area it is more than reasonable to assume that there had been a slow, peaceful penetration for a century or more preceding.

There is also some philological evidence which makes this probable. In 448 the emperor Theodosius sent an embassy to

the Hunnish chief, Attila, who was then established in central Hungary. The rhetor

**Attila among the Slavs** Priscus, who took part in the expedition, has left on record the towns passed through, and tells us that the members of the party were offered on their journey a honey drink called 'medos' in the vernacular of the local peasants. The Slavonic word for mead could only be recorded as 'medos' by a Greek of the fifth century, while not 'medos' but 'midos' would be how a Greek would represent the cognate Gothic word. This argument, turning as it does merely on the rendering in Greek of a vowel sound, seems, nevertheless, philologically irrefragable, and makes it very likely that the foreigners amongst whom the Huns found themselves were indeed Slavs.

Passing, however, from philological speculation to historical fact, we have no certain indication of the presence of Slavs in the Byzantine Empire until the time of Procopius. Procopius tells us that in the year when Justinian ascended the throne (527) the Sclaveni and Antae made almost annual raids and wrought insufferable deeds against the local inhabitants.

From this date on our information is much more exact and detailed. Greek concern with the warlike barbarians of the north rapidly changes from the archaeological, academic interest of the earlier historians; it becomes a matter of life and death to learn and to record for their commanders and for future generations

the methods of warfare and the barbarous habits of these new threateners of the national liberty. The discovery that the Slavs could fight and were ready to combine among themselves and with other marauding peoples gave the Greeks good reason to fear that they themselves might be subjugated and their civilization overthrown.

After 527, attacks by the Slavs steadily became more daring and persistent, and it is possible to follow them out almost year by year. Sometimes they came alone, but more often they fought in the train of the Huns, Bulgars and Avars. In order to minimise the danger of the continual raids against the Empire, Justinian ordered the construction of a great series of fortresses and ramparts which extended up to the Long Wall built in front of Constantinople in 502 (see page 229). These works proved unavailing against the attacks, which were launched with ever greater tenacity and frequency, and which found fewer and fewer soldiers, whose integrity could be trusted, to withstand them.

During the years immediately following 530 there was a lull, but it was the lull before the storm, for in

545 the Slavs were attacking Thrace. In the next

**Hammer blows at Eastern Empire**

sixteen years, they had twice hurled themselves on Thrace and Illyria and had threatened North Italy and Nish in South Serbia. Somewhat later a joint attack by Huns and Slavs imperilled the Long Wall.

From about 560 the Slavs were assisted in their onset against Byzantium by the Avars, a Turko-Tatar tribe which had suddenly appeared from the heart of Asia. Their leaders had been received in 558 by the emperor, who was obliged to pacify them by gifts and promises of tribute. We are told that all Constantinople flocked to see this 'wondrous people.' Soon, however, the tribute was not paid to the Avars' satisfaction, and a series of onslaughts which aimed at the capture of the capital was undertaken by the barbarian allies. The first lasting occupation of Greece took place in 591, when she was already weakened by the attacks of 577 and 578. The testimony

of John of Ephesus in 584 is interesting. 'Even to-day,' he writes, 'they dwell in the Roman provinces without anxiety or fear, pillaging, slaying and burning. They have gained riches; they have gold, silver, herds of horses and a wealth of arms, and have learned to wage war better than the Romans.'

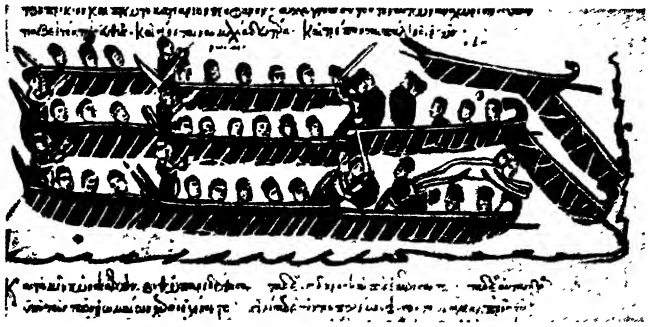
The end of the century saw a temporary turn of the tide, and the Byzantine generals ventured across the Danube and gained substantial victories against the Avars and the Slavs. But these triumphs were destined to be short-lived, for, with the accession of Phocas and Heraclius, it became impossible to hold the Save and the Danube. Italy was attacked, Illyria and Dalmatia were occupied and Salonica was all but taken. The frequent assaults against Constantinople culminated in 626, when,

**Last attack on Constantinople** according to Greek accounts, the sea ran red with the blood of Slav men and women. The city held out, however, and was rarely afterwards attacked; its capture was no longer necessary to the Slavs, as they had by now obtained a firm footing in the Balkans.

This year marked the high-water mark of the Avar power. From being a mighty people, whose name, terrible even to their Slavonic helpmates, is recorded in Polish and Czech words meaning savage and giant, they sank into insignificance and became subservient to the Slavs.

Throughout the second half of the seventh century the Balkans were dotted with Slavonic fortresses and villages, and even if the lament of the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, after the great plague of 746, that 'the whole country is become Slavised and barbarian' is an exaggeration, the term 'Slavonic lands' no longer refers to the territory north of the Danube but to that within the peninsula, and in particular to Macedonia and the surrounding district.

Greeks continued to be unmolested along the Black Sea, and, with the excep-



#### DUG-OUTS ON THE BOSPORUS

In their increasingly numerous onslaughts on Constantinople in the sixth century and onwards the Slavs were assisted by various barbarian allies. This Byzantine miniature, from a rare manuscript of the History of Skylitzes at Madrid, shows an attack on the city by dug-outs filled with Russians.

*Photo, G. Millet, Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne*

tion of the Salonica hinterland, on the Aegean. There were Slavs elsewhere, as we have seen, but they gradually became Hellenised, raiders and settlers mingling as time went on with the Hellenic population. Much Slavonic blood flows in the veins of the Greeks to-day, though it is impossible to determine how great the mixture of the two races has been. The best evidence that the Slavs never really supplanted the Greeks is provided by the subsequent permanent Hellenisation of southern and eastern Thrace. Slavonic place names are met with in great numbers in Corinthia and Argolis, and bear witness to the one-time existence of Slav settlements in districts now thoroughly Greek. The Greek language has also not been entirely unaffected by Slavonic, and it has been estimated that there are some 200 Greek words of Slavonic origin.

While the Slavs met Greeks in the south-east, it was against the Latin peoples that they had to test their strength in the south-west, along the Adriatic and the fringes of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Without following Slavonic campaigns there in any detail, it is enough to say that by the tenth century the invaders had ousted or assimilated the originally Latin inhabitants of the districts round Split (Spalato) and Dubrovnik (Ragusa). Throughout the Middle Ages Dalmatian Latin eked out a precarious existence in a few centres and did not finally become extinct till 1898, when the last speaker died on the Island of Krk (Veglia).

Unlike the Adriatic Latins, those of the lower Danube and Dacia—that is, the present Rumanians and their cousins the Kutzovlachs, also known as Aromunians or Macedonian Rumanians—succeeded in partially resisting Slavicisation, although the Vlachs in particular, whose centre in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was the ancient Thessaly, have forfeited much of their former territory and have undergone partial assimilation to the Slavs.

The Thracians and the Illyrians, who had formed the majority of the inhabitants of the Balkans before the Slavs arrived, have disappeared even more completely. The Thracian language survived in some mountainous districts till the sixth century, and the great Illyrian territory which became engulfed by the Slavs is now represented by little Albania, whose people speak a language which bears eloquent witness to the Slavonic influence that must have been exercised on its population also.

Neither the Celts nor the Iranian Sarmatians nor the Goths and the other Teutonic tribes have left records in blood, place names or language that are now easily traceable. Gothic, indeed, seems to have survived in remote places until the ninth century (in the Crimea it continued to be spoken as late as the eighteenth century), and there is an isolated trace of the Lombards in the name of the village Logovardi, near Monastir. A fusion of Dacian and Roman blood is the basis of the modern Rumanian stock.

References to the Huns begin to cease about 400; they retired behind the Carpathians in 453 and are mentioned for the last time in the attack on Constantinople in 526. The Avars were more numerous than the Huns, and till the ninth century resisted complete assimilation by the Slavs, with whom and with the Magyars, who occupied the Hungarian plain at the end of that century, they then merged. The Hungarian wedge finally



#### CAVALRY ACTION BETWEEN BULGARIANS AND RUSSIANS

Racially akin to the Huns, the Bulgars seem to have followed Attila but to have broken away southward from the main Hun movement, ultimately settling in Moesia Inferior. The first Bulgarian Empire lasted from 640 to 1018. It reached its zenith under Simeon (893-927) but under Boris II came into conflict with the Russians—conflict illustrated in this picture from a Slavonic manuscript in the Vatican—and finally was destroyed by the emperor Basil II, surnamed Bulgaroctonus.

*After G. Schlumberger 'Un empereur byzantin au dixième siècle'*

cut off the South Slavs from their western and eastern kinsmen. The South Slavonic tribes were then free to develop on their own lines into the peoples we now know as Bulgars, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and their languages, which had hitherto been almost identical with Russian, rapidly took on those features which distinguish them to-day.

This survey of Slavonic contact with the Byzantines would not be complete if the earliest history of the different ethnic units into which the southern Slavs divided were passed over.

There is no reason to doubt that it was the ancestors of the Slovenes, the westernmost branch of the Jugoslavs, who took part in the attacks on Istria and Italy in 592, 600 and 602, and on Bavaria in 592. Soon afterwards they became subject to the Avars, from whom they were liberated in the second quarter of the seventh century. Towards the end of the eighth century they came under Bavarian and afterwards Frankish domination. Their subsequent history, until the liberation brought about in the twentieth century by the Great War, is that of an Austrian subject province.

The view expressed by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (950) that the Croats and Serbs did not reach their present territory till 630 is not now generally accepted by scholars. Modern research has made it probable that they formed part of the invaders who came from the north and reached the Balkans at the beginning of the sixth century. It is likely that the main forces of the Slavonic attack on Durazzo in 548 were Croatian. The first historical references to Serbs and Croats occur in the ninth century when the former were fighting against the Bulgars and the latter against the Franks and the Pannonian Slavs. The Croatian empire had an early period of glory, while that of the Serbs



#### A PRINCELY CONVERT TO CHRISTIANITY

Conversion of their peoples to Christianity was made a part of the policy of Slav, Bulgarian and Russian rulers in the ninth and following centuries. This quaint miniature from a Slavonic MS. in the Vatican depicts the baptism of a barbarian prince, perhaps following that of the Russian prince Vladimir.

*From Schlumberger, L'épopée byzantine*

belongs to a somewhat later date, the eleventh century.

The Bulgarians were originally of Hunnish stock. Coming from the Volga and the Don, they first reached the Danube at the end of the fifth century and took part in the great attack on Constantinople of 626. Their chief was Asparukh, who in 679 occupied the Dobrudja. The Slavs of Bulgaria accepted the warlike strangers gladly enough, as they saw in them useful allies against Byzantium. Treaties between the two peoples were drawn up and the overlordship of the Bulgar khan was recognized by the Slavs. The Bulgarians proper quickly lost their own language and, merging with the original inhabitants of their new home, had become quite Slavonic by the ninth century. The heyday of their fame was at the close of that century, when, under the emperor Simeon, their empire extended from the shores of Albania through Epirus, Macedonia and Hungary.

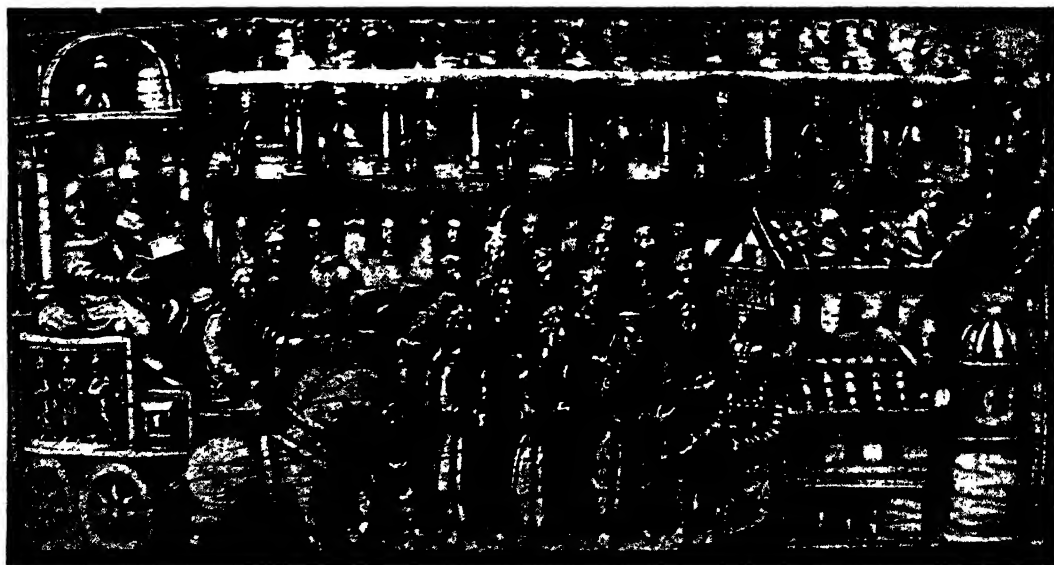
This chapter began with a reference to the similarity of Slavonic and Celtic conquests. It may end by our noting that an interesting counterpart to the presence of the Celts in Galatia is afforded by the existence of small Serbian enclaves in Asia Minor, one of which bore the name of Gordoserba or Serb Town.



#### VESTMENTS OF THE BISHOPS OF ROME IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

On the vault of the apse in S. Agnese fuori le Mura—a most interesting basilica at Rome, founded in 324, enlarged by Pope Symmachus (c. 500), rebuilt by Honorius (c. 630) and scarcely altered since—is a mosaic of S. Agnes between those two popes. The popes wear the episcopal pallium as bishops of Rome, and the whole gives a clear impression of seventh-century vestments.

*Photo, Anderson*



#### POMP THAT ATTENDED THE RECEPTION OF A SAINT'S RELICS

Rome owed much of her ecclesiastical supremacy to the bones of her martyrs, and towns less fortunately placed had to import relics (often from Rome) or invent a mythical saint. This ivory tablet (fifth century), now in the cathedral at Trèves, shows the translation of relics to a new church (right); two bishops in a chariot carry the reliquary on their knees; the procession is headed by some emperor, and his empress, cross on shoulder, receives them at the church door.

*By permission of the Chapter of Trèves Cathedral*

# THE PAPACY AND TEMPORAL POWER

Struggles of the See of Rome for Independence first from the Eastern and then from the Holy Roman Empire

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THE rise of the Papacy to well-nigh universal dominion is not the less marvellous because it is capable of explanation. In the present chapter we propose to state the factors which contributed to this momentous development, and to sketch its growth to its hour of triumph. We begin with the spiritual element: the belief that the bishop of Rome possessed a spiritual primacy as the successor of S. Peter, the rock upon which it was held that Christ had established His Church. To this also must be added the claim that in Rome not only S. Peter but S. Paul had won his crown of martyrdom. That S. Peter was bishop of Rome, though not beyond dispute, may be conceded. The length of his episcopate is another question, not vital to the present issue.

Granted his episcopate, granted also the uncertain exegesis of the text which exalts him into the rock of foundation, there is the further claim that he handed on his peculiar prerogatives to his successors. This question depends on its acceptance or rejection upon certain pre-suppositions which have sharply divided the world for the last four centuries. What we ought to realize is that, whether the claims be true or false in fact, they are none the less real in their results. The belief in them of the larger part of the Church is the foundation on which the power of Papacy was built and still rests.

The martyrdom in Rome of S. Peter and S. Paul is a less contentious factor. The evidence seems to the present writer to be beyond reasonable doubt, nor would there appear to be grounds for rejecting the traditional sites of their burial (see,

however, page 2181). Accepting, therefore, the fact, due weight must be assigned to it. We see this more clearly when we grasp the importance of the supposed martyrdom of S. Mark at Alexandria, the later desire of Venice to obtain the saint's bones, and the influence throughout the Spanish world of the claims of Santiago to the body of S. James. Negatively also we obtain a measure of the importance of this factor when we find France in lieu of an apostle driven to invent as its patron saint Dionysius the Areopagite, and England, at a later date, driven to take refuge in an almost mythical S. George.

That S. Peter and S. Paul were both martyred and buried in Rome gave to the city a sanctity that no other place could claim, except Jerusalem, to say nothing of the Rome sanctified thousands that in popular by her Martyrs repute were supposed to have been martyred in its Colosseum, the export of whose bones from the Catacombs formed at one time in the Middle Ages almost the chief element of Roman commerce. If to-day tourists from all over the world journey to Assisi, how much more would be the influence in the age of faith of Rome, the city of the apostles and martyrs of God, at a time when, as we see in the story of the Crusades, a special sanctity was attached to places. Rome, with its great stations of pilgrimage, was the Jerusalem of the medieval world.

Another factor was of immense importance. Critics may smile at the tale of Constantine's 'donation' of the West to Bishop Sylvester, while he retired to his new city in the East, but, after all, the Middle Ages were right when they



believed in its truth. In removing the seat of government from the Tiber to the Bosphorus the aim of Constantine was to restore the imperial power by building on a new foundation where he would be free from the restraints and memories of tradition and paganism alike. But Constantine did not realize that he had done more than change the centre of his empire. He made the separation of East and West inevitable; not less inevitable was it that in the West the dominion should pass to the one power which represented continuity with the historic splendours of the Roman name and by its organism upheld the decaying tradition of national unity.

Hitherto the bishops of Rome had been obscure clerics, mostly Greeks, of whom, however, it was claimed that twenty-seven had laid down their lives for the faith. In the first three centuries it is hard to discover among their shadowy names either a distinguished writer or a master mind. For the great fathers of the Church (see Chap. 87), as well as the great prelates who established the power of the hierarchy, Cyprian of Carthage, Osius of Cordova, Ambrose of Milan, Chrysostom of Constantinople and Hilary of Arles, we must look elsewhere than Rome.

Without greatness in themselves the bishops of Rome owed their influence to the consciousness of men that they were confronting paganism, with all its splendour and pride, in the capital of the world. Though from the days of Cyprian the primacy of Peter had been recognized as an established fact, nevertheless the bishop of Rome, who claimed to be his successor, had been but the *primus inter pares*: he was forced, however reluctantly, to acknowledge as his equals the



**FOUNDER OF THE SEE OF ROME**

Cast probably in the fifth-sixth century from an ancient mould, with a head and hands added in contemporary style, this bronze statue of S. Peter holding the symbolic keys is one of the treasures of the Vatican Basilica.

*Photo, Anderson*

apostolic patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch.

But by the removal of the imperial seat to the Bosphorus, followed by the decay and ruin of the imperial power in Italy, Constantine unwittingly put the bishops of Rome in the place of the absent emperors, inheriting their tradition, their prestige and the very titles (for instance, *Pontifex Maximus*) which they derived from paganism. Moreover, the bishop of Rome was the greatest landowner in the Empire.

Furthermore, the step which led to the aggrandisement of the see of Rome was destructive of any rivalry from the Eastern bishops. At Constantinople the emperor had no intention of being other than the supreme head of the Church. Constantine and Justinian two centuries later controlled and guided

ecclesiastical legislation, administered discipline and enforced orthodoxy. In their hands was the appointment and deposition of both bishops and patriarchs—prerogatives never surrendered by the feeblest of their successors. Constantine, though unbaptised until his death-bed, was officially recognized as 'isapostolos,' the equal of an apostle. The son of Constantine delighted in the title 'Bishop of Bishops,' and claimed to impose Arianism on the Empire at his will; while by the Council of Chalcedon the emperors were accorded an inviolable priesthood. The patriarch of Constantinople, even though a Chrysostom, stood under the shadow of the imperial throne. To the only possible rival of papal Rome, thus restricted by the pressure of secular authority, there was denied the opportunity of contesting her supremacy.

But in the West Rome had no peer. Gaul with its S. Denis made no claim to apostolic foundation, without which

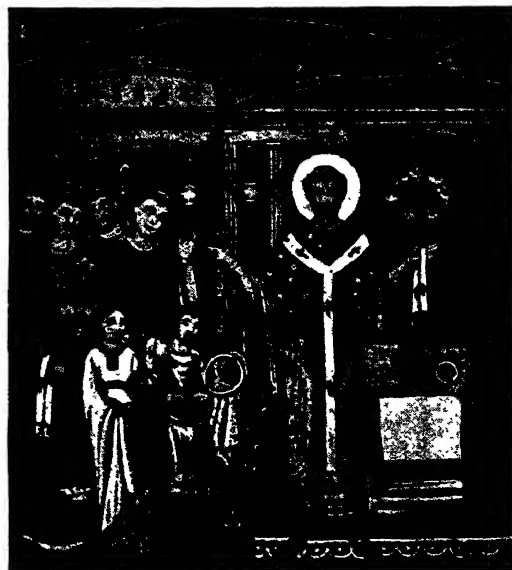
there could be no patriarchate. Spain had its S. James, but against both Gaul and Spain there was reckoned their Arian apostasy. Nor must we forget as a factor in papal growth the speculations and discussions which wrecked the moral supremacy of the great Eastern sees and rent asunder the Greek church. In the West there was peace, for Rome had impressed

upon the Church the characteristics of her power, subordination to authority and legal form. Her bishops also gained reputation even from their obscurity and silence. Without either the intellect or desire to enter into subtleties and mysteries so dear to the Oriental mind, they had their reward. Others had gone astray; the bishops of Rome alone were unerring. So with the spread of Arianism and the decay of the troubled East, men turned more and more from its struggles to the decision of Rome. By the Council of Sardica (343) its bishop was made a court of appeal in matters concerning orthodoxy. Each faction, in its difficulties, lunged itself at his feet.

Of this we have the earliest example in the so-called Epistle of Clement (A.D. 96), in reality a reply from 'the church which sojourns at Rome' to an invitation from 'the church that sojourns at Corinth' to heal an obscure dispute. We see this tendency further developed in the visits to Rome during the second century of such prominent Eastern Christians as Hegesippus (c. 151), Polycarp (c. 154) and Origen (c. 215), as well as the efforts of the Montanists to obtain recognition from Pope Eleutherius (d. 189). In this condemnation of Origen the decision of Rome seems to have been of special importance. All these events bear witness to a wide-spread anxiety to know the standpoint of what Origen had called 'the very old church' of the metropolis. This culminated in the statement of Irenaeus and Tertullian that agreement with the Church at Rome, with its detailed succession of bishops, was the best safeguard for the transmission of the apostolic faith. To some extent Rome had won this confidence by its early formulation in the so-called 'Apostles' Creed of the faith of the Church, and by

its constant protest against all Gnostic heresies. At Rome also we find the first attempts to fix a canon of the New Testament. By the end of the second century Victor (c. 197), the first pope of Latin origin, definitely advanced claims to universal leadership, maintaining that every congregation which failed to fall in with the Roman paschal arrangement was thereby excommunicated. This action of Victor was imitated by his successors, especially Calixtus (d. 223).

The stars in their courses fought for the Papacy. The Eastern patriarchates, Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria, fell before the Moslem hordes, but in the West the sack of Rome by Alaric (August 24, 410) led more than any other event to papal aggrandisement. It delivered the Papacy from the dead hand of the past. The ancient city with its pagan traditions was hopelessly ruined. Honorius and his feeble successors hid themselves at Ravenna, while the power of the Roman aristocracy was broken. But the bishop of Rome rose in added grandeur above the wreck of the old institutions. In the East in the seventh century eight hundred sees were swallowed up in the vortex of Islam; out of four hundred in Africa only four survived.



PETER'S THIRD SUCCESSOR

Peter's third successor is said to have been S. Clement. His celebration of mass occurs as an eleventh-century fresco in the Basilica of S. Clemente, ruined by the Normans in 1084 and excavated in 1857 beneath the later church.

In the West the barbarians, whether Frank, Goth or Norman, when conquered by the Church, infused by their victories new blood into the dominion of Peter. Even in the general massacres with which their invasions began, it was in the churches alone that there was safety. 'The thicker the hay, the easier it is mowed,' was the reply of Alaric in 410 to the trembling messengers of the Senate: he would leave them only 'their lives.' Yet he respected the shrines of the Apostles; treasure and life were safe there.

In the fifth century we come across the first pope on whose mind dawned the conception of Rome's universal spiritual supremacy. Innocent I (402-417) claimed that the churches of the West owed obedience to his see, and must maintain a rigid uniformity according to Roman usages. He was succeeded at no great interval by Leo the Great (440-461). It was Leo's fortune to stand out as the one great name in the Christian world. Augustine (438) and Cyril (445) were both dead; women and boys ruled in Ravenna and Constantinople. When Attila swept down on Rome (451), it was neither by her armies nor by her walls that she was saved. The barbarian bowed before the eloquence and confidence of Leo.

A Roman of the Romans, Leo was thus the first of the popes to assert to his countrymen, by actions and words, that the power of Rome was eternal. Babylon the Great had fallen, but

in her place was the City of God, whose dominion should be an everlasting dominion. It was for her coming that the former things had passed away. Leo had adopted the thought of Augustine: the pagan city of Rome ruled the bodies and died through the vices of its sons; the new city should rule the spirits and live through the virtues of her saints.

At the Council of Chalcedon (451) the visions and claims of Leo received authoritative recognition. His letter was accepted by the East as the settlement of the weary dispute over the doctrine of the hypostatic union; the primacy of the Roman see was acknowledged. The Council's rider that this was the result of political supremacy did not detract from its value as an instrument in the hands of her bishops, who soon found opportunity for its use. When Hilary of Arles claimed the primacy of Gaul, Leo, on the appeal of the bishops, summoned him to Rome. On his refusal to recognize the jurisdiction of the apostolic see Leo deposed Hilary from



TWO OF THE EARLIER POPES SHOWN IN CONTEMPORARY FRESCOS

S. Paolo fuori le Mura, the great basilica built in the days of Theodosius and Honorius over the reputed tomb of S. Paul, was completely ruined by fire in 1823. From it were rescued some of the medallion wall-portraits of the earlier popes, of which these two, S. Damasus (366-84) and S. Siricius (384-97), are among the best preserved. The early date of their execution is shown by the classical form of the pallium which they are wearing.

*From Wilpert and Rossi 'Roma Soutterranea'*

his office. The triumph of Rome was complete when the emperor Valentinian III, in his famous Constitution (445), denounced Hilary and proclaimed the decrees of the bishop of Rome to be binding, and his consent necessary for any changes in the church of Gaul.

Justinian (527-65) also, in his Code, recognized the supremacy of the Roman Church, and commanded all the others to be united with her. Another custom which dates from this period gave the bishop of Rome a further hold on the prelates of the West. This was the grant of the pallium, a white scarf of lamb's wool with black spots, the sign of metropolitan authority. It was eagerly sought after, though its acceptance involved of necessity some recognition of dependence.

The founders of the popedom, Innocent I and Leo I, were succeeded at the close of the sixth century by one who more than consolidated their work. Gregory I (590-604), to whom by universal consent men have given the double titles of Saint and Great, must be regarded as the real father of the medieval Papacy. He marks in more ways than one the beginning of a new era. In the year before he ascended the throne Spain renounced her Arianism at the Council of Toledo, and proclaimed her return to the Roman unity. The first monk to become a pope, Gregory was also the first of the popes to turn to Western races to redress the balance of the East. By his writings, his zeal, his charity, his fame for personal sanctity, his quickness to

grasp opportunity and his administrative wisdom, he succeeded in giving to his see a wide extension of spiritual authority. For Illyricum, Gaul, Spain and Africa acknowledged his metropolitan claims,

while Italy, swept by the Lombard invaders, recognized in him her head in temporal as well as spiritual matters. Nevertheless he refused the title of 'Universal Bishop,' which John of Constantinople had arrogated to himself. He preferred with shrewd humility to adopt the name made familiar to us by centuries of irony, 'Servus Servorum'—'The Servant of the Servants of God.'

To hold the metropolitans in dependence on the Roman see, to restore the rights of the bishops, to crush heresy and schism, to revive the spiritual life of the Church, to make monasticism under the sane rule of Benedict (see page 2276) an effective instrument of good, especially in missionary work among the barbarian conquerors, for instance in England, these were some of the duties, he conceived, of the successor of Peter. In his charter to the monastery of Autun we have the first instance of the papal curse used as a bulwark against royal oppression. Hildebrand

and Innocent III only carried out in later ages with further detail the ideas of Gregory. On March 12, 604, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, Gregory, 'the consul of God'—to use the fine phrase that men wrote over his tomb—'went to enjoy an eternal triumph.' (For an estimate of his character see also Chap. 87).



POPE GREGORY THE GREAT

A contemporary ivory diptych in the cathedral at Monza shows Gregory I, the great pope (590-604) who more than any other established the supremacy of the Papacy in the West.

By the bloodless weapons of his missionaries the barbarians of Britain, the heretics of Gaul and Spain, were once more added to an empire more lasting than that of Julius. Through the labours of the Englishman Boniface of Crediton, the Apostle of Germany, the Gospel was first preached beyond the Rhine. But in his letter to Gregory II (November, 722), Boniface acknowledged himself to be the servant of the popes. Thus for the children that she had lost Rome had found others. On the firm foundation laid by Gregory I the life of Europe was established anew. The secular empire had been swept away by the flood; against the 'rock' of Peter the deluge of barbarism had broken in vain.

The bishops of Rome were still in theory dependent upon Constantinople. Even Gregory had been deferential to the contemptible Phocas, and servile to Maurice, while his successors were not consecrated until confirmed by the emperor or his western representative, the exarch at Ravenna. Silverius (537) and Martin I (653), who came into collision with the imperial despotism, were the victims of its anger. But in the eighth century circumstances enabled the popes to throw off what little dependence still bound them to Constantinople.

The opportunity arose over the iconoclastic controversy (726). The great emperor Leo the Isaurian, stung by the Mahomedan taunt that the Christians worshipped idols, desiring also to infuse a new life into the Empire by correcting the sentimentalism of Oriental Christianity, ordered that images should only be used as architectural ornament. Apart altogether from the plea of Gregory the Great, 'that paintings are to the ignorant what writing is to those who can read,' the violence of Leo—whose attempted reformation was rather a premature rationalism enforced upon an unreasoning age—became the defence of that which may have been in itself indefensible. In the West as in the East the common people, goaded by persecution and superstition, rose in defence of their relics. The exarch at Ravenna was slain, and Pope Gregory II, whom the emperor had deposed and endeavoured to seize, yield-

ing, though unwillingly, to the popular voice, declared Leo excommunicate, and cut his see off from dependence on Constantinople (729).

These events led to more important consequences. Liutprand, the king of the Lombards, saw in the dissensions between Rome and Constantinople a double opportunity. Proclaiming himself the champion of the popular faith, he overran the exarchate; professing that he acted for his overlord at Constantinople, he almost succeeded in capturing Rome. In despair Gregory III appealed to the protection of the Franks (739).

Under the leadership of Clovis (481-512) this league of German tribes had extended their empire from the Inn to the Atlantic. The Franks champion other Teutonic nations the Papacy had been converted by Arian missionaries; the baptism of Clovis was into the Catholic faith. On Christmas Day, 496, he and three thousand of his warriors were solemnly received into the Church at Reims, and from the first the Franks had been the orthodox allies of papal Rome. Their zeal was increased by subsequent events. By his signal victory near Poitiers over the Saracens (732) Charles the Hammer proved himself more than the champion of Christianity. In rolling back from western Europe the Moslem invaders the Frank changed the history of the world. To him, therefore, Gregory III turned for aid, beseeching him to complete his victories for the faith by delivering the Holy See. Charles died before he could obey the call, but his son, Pepin the Short, fulfilled what may have been his father's intentions.

Influenced by the English Boniface, he entered into an alliance with Rome, the advantages of which were mutual. On his side Pope Zacharias, now claiming to be the king of kings, pronounced the deposition of the nominal sovereign, the last of the Merovingian kings, Childeric III (751). The Franks, thus freed by the Church from their oath, elected to the vacant throne the real head of the nation, hitherto styled the mayor of the palace. A sanctity as yet unknown and more potent than legal claim was added to

the office. In 754 a pope, Stephen II, for the first time crossed the Alps, and at St. Denis anointed the new sovereign and his two sons with holy oil. Pepin in return discharged his share of the compact by twice descending into Italy to the rescue of the Papacy. The Lombards were driven back, the imperial exarchate delivered from their power and bestowed on the bishop of Rome. The forgery about the same time of the so-called 'donation' of Constantine to Pope Sylvester gave the appearance of legality to this extension of the papal power.

Thus began the temporal sovereignty of the popes. This was the nucleus of the States of the Church. In return, Stephen bestowed on the Frankish king the title of Patrician of the Romans. His rights were an undefined superintendence of the papal elections; his duties the defence and protection of the Church and her temporal interests. This new title paved the way for the higher dignity that was to follow.

When, on Pepin's death (768), the Lombards once more rose in revolt and threatened the new States of the Church, his son Charles the Great—Charlemagne—swept down from the Alps, seized the Lombard kingdom for his own and renewed to the pope the gift of his father (774). Henceforth for twenty-four years the government of Rome was carried on in his name as Patrician, though events were still dated and edicts issued in the name and by the year of the reign of the emperor in Constantinople.

Such homage to legality was shadowy; the rule of Charlemagne in reality was absolute. He demanded the oath of allegiance; he received the symbols of his guardianship—the keys of S. Peter's grave, and the banner of the city. But it was time to

establish on a basis more legal and better understood this alliance between the Franks and the Latins, between Church and State. The moment was opportune for a change. In Constantinople a woman, usurper and murderer, the empress Irene, forced men by her crimes to ask by what right she claimed to rule over Rome.

In 798 an attack was made on Leo III as he went in procession from the Lateran to the Church of S. Lorenzo. The pope was wounded and left for dead. He recovered, and fled across the Alps. At Paderborn he found his protector, who received him with all honour. In the autumn of 800, after a trial in S. Peter's, at which he himself presided, of the charges which the Romans brought against their bishop, Charlemagne restored the pope to his rebellious city. The gratitude of Leo had something to bestow in return. So on Christmas Day, 800, there took place in S. Peter's that memorable event which separates the history of modern Europe



LATERAN BASILICA AS IT USED TO BE

The Lateran Basilica is now altered out of all recognition. Said to have been founded for Pope Sylvester by order of Constantine in the Lateran Palace, it was rebuilt in the ninth and fourteenth centuries; this illustration from a church painting shows it as it was before 1644, when the latest series of alterations began.

From *Ecole française, Rome, 'Mélanges d'archéologie'*

from that of the ancient world, the coronation by the sole surviving representative of the original apostolic sees of the kneeling Charlemagne as the first head of the Holy Roman Empire.

To the careless observer it might seem as if by this coronation the Papacy had voluntarily surrendered part of her power and claims to another. Henceforth the popes would no longer rule alone in the imperial city ; others would represent more fully than they its

**The Papacy after  
Charlemagne**

past glories. In reality it was not so. It is true that Charlemagne was supreme in Church as in State. This second Constantine convened and directed the deliberations of synods, lecturing even popes and exacting their obedience. The Council of Frankfort, at his bidding, directly opposed in the matter of image worship the policy followed by the popes. But the Church gained more than she gave ; for Charlemagne lavished upon her wealth and power. Her bishops and abbots were made a part of the rising feudalism, while tithes for the first time were enforced by law. Throughout his vast dominions Charlemagne knit the Church into one compact body, subjecting the bishops to the control of the metropolitans and the metropolitans in turn to the bishop of Rome. From this unification and centralisation of a dismembered Europe, the Papacy stood to win in the long run more than the Empire itself. The temporary dependence galled her not ; she awaited with patience the inevitable developments. The relations which had begun in real if unacknowledged subjection were soon to emerge first into the claim of equality, then into the assertion of supremacy. When the great emperor rested from his labours that to a later generation seemed superhuman, Rome kept her gains, canonised his memory, and laughed at the attempted control of his feeble successors.

In nothing is the greatness of Charlemagne more manifest than in the indestructibility of his idea of a universal Christian republic of which the two poles should be emperor and pope, which also should inherit all the rights and prestige of the older Rome. The idea loomed the larger through its very indistinctness. In

the chaos of the next age, when the floods of barbarism once more overwhelmed the world, men remembered the vision of a better order which had illuminated the times of Charlemagne. Though his empire was rent in pieces, never more in actual fact to be reunited, men still clung to belief in its continuance. So when Wends, Czechs, Normans and Magyars no longer carried terror from the Danube to the Ocean, men turned back to his vision of a universal Christian republic.

The history of the Holy Roman Empire as empire need not further concern us. Here it is sufficient to note those elements which influenced the growth of the Papacy, and led to centuries of feud between the civil and ecclesiastical powers. The first of these elements was the very character of the Empire itself. As we have seen, this rested not so much on a legal basis, or even on the right of conquest, as on a sort of mutual understanding, one party to which was the Papacy. The rights and duties of the new Empire were left undetermined, for that Empire was the resultant of memories and dreams and of hopes mistaken for facts. Its strength lay in its appeal to men's imagination ; its emphasis of continuity with a past to which men looked back as to a golden age. We need not wonder that in actual power it always fell short of its claims.

We shall do well not to inquire whether this ideal was ever realized in fact. It is characteristic of the Middle Ages that they did not seek to reconcile belief and practice. The more deeply they outraged the one, the more tenaciously they clung to the other. Laxity of practice was the concern of the individual ; it might involve the loss of his soul. But laxity in belief meant the downfall of the social structure. Men were saved both in this world and in the life to come by the correctness of dogma and doctrine. When facts would not square with doctrine, then so much the worse for the facts.

In theory the Western world acknowledged one overlord. In actual fact, not only Spain and England, but even France, cared little what new Germanic Caesar was the ghostly representative of



a dead power. This weakness of the Empire gave to the popes their chance; a weakness accentuated by the fact that the emperors were invariably, though not of necessity, Germans, whose hands were busy at home and whose visits to Italy were limited, as a rule, to the journey to Rome to receive the imperial crown. Here and there arose an emperor who turned the dream into fact; but in general the history of the Empire is the history of sovereigns whose power to make good their claims grew steadily less, while that of their rivals, the bishops of Rome, grew yearly in strength. Even the feeble, corrupt popes of the tenth century could not destroy by their conduct the power of the Papacy to the extent that a feeble emperor could prejudice his claims. For the Papacy was always served by a faithful secretariat; a feeble emperor was the prey of vassals ever struggling for independence.

The student would do well to remember that in the Middle Ages antagonism between Church and State did not exist, at any rate in theory. No thinker then hesitated to affirm that the very existence of the Roman, that is universal, Church was bound up and one with the very existence of the Roman, that

**State and Church** is catholic, Empire. If  
**Synonymous** the former were eternal  
the latter must be so  
also: one world dominion inseparably connected with one spiritual dominion, the two but different aspects of the same thing. For this belief there was, in fact, an historical justification. Christianity and the Roman Empire had risen together. Both were the emphasis of universal humanity, the striving after one common citizenship. By the barbarians also Christianity had been associated from the first with the Roman Empire as its visible unity and bulwark.

There is this further justification that in the ancient world religious and political divisions usually went hand in hand together. The organic principle in all social and national life was the religious belief. The chief basis, therefore, of national unity must be a common religious life. Of this unity of world dominions though there were kings many and lords

many, yet was there but one head, the emperor; so of the unity of the one world religion, though there were bishops many and metropolitans many, yet was there but one head, the pope. Of the pope, the supreme duty was to save men's souls; of the emperor, to care for their bodies. But as body and soul are but one, so also are emperor and pope in their mutual dependence. The one was the antitype of the other; the emperor a civil pope, the pope a spiritual emperor. The seat of dominion of both lay in the City on the Seven Hills. There were they crowned as the elect of God; there they received their commission, not through men, or even through one another, but direct from the King of Kings.

Other crowns the emperors wore, the iron crown of Lombardy, the silver crown of Germany: that of Rome alone was pure **Theoretical union of Papacy & Empire** gold; double also, for Empire and Rome, as 'urbis et orbis.' At their coronation both pope and emperor called God to witness that he would cherish and defend the other. Against this union of the two the gates of hell should not prevail. They were the two swords of which Christ had said, 'It is enough.'

Pope and emperor were thus supposed to be two and yet one. Severance between the two was impossible; they must work together for the one common good of the one common flock. But this complete accord of the papal and imperial powers was never attained but three times in the history of the centuries: during the life of Charlemagne and Leo III, under Otto III and his two popes, Gregory V and Silvester II, and thirdly under Henry III. At all other times pope and emperor were seeking to subordinate the other to himself, the pope declaring that he made the emperor as the Vicar of God and that the temporal power was his gift; the emperors seeking to get the election of popes into their own hands and to subordinate spiritual to civil authority. This battle forms the centre round which revolves the churchmanship and politics of the Middle Ages.

In the struggle both parties found that a man's foes are they of his own household:

the emperor in the dukes and princes of Germany seeking to throw off all feudal dependence, and welcoming for this purpose the papal thunders; the pope in the nobles and mob of the city of Rome ever looking to the power beyond the Alps to deliver them from the control of the sovereign within their gates. Nor ought we to forget as one element in this conflict of centuries that the public opinion of Europe—to use a modern phrase—was undoubtedly expressed in

**Theory belied** brief by Gregory IV when he  
**in practice** wrote to a cousin of Charles the Great: 'You ought not

to be ignorant that the government of souls, which belongs to the pontiff, is above that of temporal matters, which belongs to the emperors.' Body and soul are undoubtedly one, but in the well-regulated man the body will obey the soul; to act otherwise were to return to the level of brutes. Thus the world found that it could do better without a Caesar than without a pope. The power of the first steadily waned; the power of the second as steadily grew.

With the accession of the greatest of the popes, Gregory VII (1073–85; see also *Chronicle XVIII*), better known by his name of Hildebrand, this idea of the supreme value of the Papacy reached its highest development. In the two centuries before Hildebrand the Papacy passed the period of its deepest degradation (see *Chronicle XVII* and Chap. 107). At one time Rome was in danger of capture by the Saracens. The see of Rome seemed to be sinking into a hopeless abyss, through popes that were either corrupt or weak. Europe recognized that there was nothing whatever to take the place of the Papacy; its fall would leave an impossible vacuum. At all hazards the bishop of Rome must be reinstated in his dignity and position.

In another respect Hildebrand found his work made easy for him. The age was longing for reform. The second wandering of the nations with its reign of crime and darkness was at last over. On all hands there were signs of the breaking of a new day, a longing for a higher standard of life, especially among the clergy. The conscience of Europe was awaking. The strength of Hildebrand lay in the

appeal he made to this new desire for righteousness, the practical wisdom with which he developed the ideas expounded by dreamers, or used as his instruments the forces around him. For twenty years before he was acclaimed as bishop of Rome he was the power behind the throne directing the reforming energies of Leo IX and choosing his successors. So long as the great emperor Henry III was alive, Hildebrand did not quarrel with the secular power. There were other tasks more urgent, the freeing of the Papacy from the tyranny at its gates of the robber barons, the emancipation in papal elections of the college of cardinals from civic interference or imperial nomination. Hildebrand's political genius showed itself in his alliance with the Normans of Sicily, and his bestowal of the papal blessing on Duke William's conquest of England.

But on his election to the chair of St. Peter (April 22, 1073) Hildebrand deemed the time had come to carry out his whole design. In place of the Holy Roman Empire with its dual leadership, he had the idea of the United States of the World with the bishop of Rome as the supreme head over the various kings

and governors. They were the proconsuls of a world-wide empire, from which an appeal on all matters must lie to the new Caesar, who should decide all things as one 'who should answer on the dreadful Day of Judgement before the Just Judge.' The divine right of kings was thus turned into the delegated authority of God's vicar. We who live in days when Europe is groping after a league of nations, of which one weakness is that there is no official head, should have some sympathy with Hildebrand's vision of a league of nations of which the perpetual head should be God's representative on earth. Hildebrand failed to realize that such a head was more than mortal.

Not content with asserting pretensions that would inevitably bring the Papacy into conflict with all secular authority, Hildebrand attempted to purge the Church from two great evils. In spite of an indifferent episcopate he enforced celibacy upon the clergy, thus establishing for the secular priesthood the monastic

ideal. A harder task was the rooting out of simony. With characteristic thoroughness Hildebrand struck at its root, the system of lay investiture which had made the bishop through feudal bonds the tool of kings. The passions which Hildebrand aroused by his measures were intense, but he entered undeterred into a struggle with the Empire for the enforcement of his ideals.

He summoned the emperor, Henry IV, to answer before him for his crimes, and on his refusal absolved all his subjects from their oath of allegiance, and finally called on the German princes to elect a new ruler. Hildebrand's triumph was completed at Canossa, the home of his protector, Matilda of Tuscany. For three days the emperor, abandoned by all, stood in the snow bare of foot, clad only in his shirt, knocking in vain at the gate of the castle, imploring that he might be admitted to kiss the pope's foot and receive his pardon. At last, on the fourth day, still barefoot and in his shirt alone, the son of the great Henry III was brought before the 'little old man' and promised with the most sacred oaths all that Hildebrand demanded (January 28, 1077).

The pride of Hildebrand had overreached itself. Such depths of humiliation produced a natural reaction not only in

Henry, but in the public opinion of Europe.

Reaction in favour  
of the Empire

Within a month Henry, with fears at rest and a mind that had gained strength and perseverance from his trials, was meditating the overthrow of his great antagonist. To this he was spurred on by the enthusiasm and hatred of the Lombards. Henceforth we see him taking the aggressive, seeking in every way with caution and skill to undo the past. On the other hand, Hildebrand became daily entangled more and more in difficulties and danger. By an indecision scarcely characteristic or worthy, he kindled in Germany a civil war. Both sides claimed that he had broken faith, and cast upon him the responsibility for the untold slaughter on the Saxon plains.

The dark tale of the struggle in Germany, with its torrents of blood and its ravaged lands, is itself the best comment on the

fallibility even of an absolutely infallible pope. It seemed as if Hildebrand were waiting to see to which side victory would incline. Not until then would he interpret his dark oracles, or compose men's passions with apostolic commands. Victorious at last over the Saxons, Henry IV appeared with his army before the gates of Rome. For three years the victor of Canossa was besieged within the city. But the pope's defiance only rose higher with danger. With the foe at his gates he issued his dictates to Europe as in the days of his unclouded prosperity. When at last the city was betrayed to the enemy the indomitable old man retired to S. Angelo until rescued by

an army of Normans and Saracens, who forced Henry to retreat, pillaged

Hildebrand's spirit  
in adversity

Rome and sold thousands of its citizens into slavery. Sick at heart Gregory sought a refuge at Salerno. He was conscious that the end had come.

On his death-bed he reviewed before the kneeling cardinals the incidents of his life. There was no faltering in his belief in the justice of his cause, no hesitation in his emphasis of the great principles which had regulated his life. 'My confidence,' he murmured, 'is in this one thing only: I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity. And yet for this I die in exile.' 'Nay,' cried a bishop, 'in exile, vicar of Christ, thou canst not die. Thou hast received the nations for thy inheritance.' The reply came too late; that mighty spirit had already passed away (May 25, 1085).

Its innumerable ramifications preclude the task of narrating the weary struggle after Hildebrand's death. Until Innocent III there arose no pope able to draw his bow; nevertheless his policy was adopted in the main and became the guiding principle of the Papacy. With the incoming of the fourteenth century the Hildebrandine conceptions received a fatal set-back through the arrogance of Boniface VIII, the rise of the new nationalism, the Babylonish Captivity of the Papacy at Avignon and the subsequent disastrous Schism (see Chap. 120). But the bishops of Rome never departed from the main principles laid down by Hildebrand.

# TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XVII

- 867 Accession of Basil I, the Macedonian.  
England: Danish conquest of Northumbria.
- 869 Lothair II d. Partition of Middle Kingdom.
- 871 England: 'Year of Battles.' Alfred king.
- 872 Harold Fairhair founds Norwegian kingdom.  
Norsemen colonise Iceland.
- 875 Lewis II d. Charles the Bald emperor.  
Lewis the German d. His sons share Germany.
- 876 Basil II takes up Saracen war in South Italy.
- 877 Charles the Bald d. Louis II king of France.
- 878 Alfred defeats Danes at Ethington: Danelaw established by Treaty of Wedmore.  
Saracens take Syracuse, completing conquest of Sicily.
- 879 Louis III and Carloman kings of France.  
Charles the Fat, of Swabia, k. of Italy.
- 880 Boso independent k. of Arles (Burgundy).
- 882 Charles the Fat sole German k. and emperor.  
Carloman sole king of France.  
Saracens in Campania.
- 885 Charles the Fat k. of 'All the Franks' but Arles.  
Northmen besiege Paris; Charles buys them off.
- 886 Leo VI, the Wise, succeeds Basil I.
- 887 Arnulf elected German king. Charles abdicates.
- 888 Charles d. Odo count of Paris elected French k.  
Permanent separation of France from Empire.  
Rudolf independent k. of Upper Burgundy.  
Wido of Spoleto emperor.
- 891 Arnulf crowned emperor.
- 896 Odo d. Charles the Simple k. of France.
- 898 Magyar incursion into Italy.
- 899 Arnulf d. Lewis the Child German king.
- 900 or 901 Alfred d. Edward the Elder k. of English.
- 901 Berengar of Friuli k. of Italy.
- 901-5 Contest of Berengar with Lewis of Arles, who is crowned emperor.
- 905 Berengar expels Lewis.
- 905-925 Sancho I founds kingdom of Navarre.
- 909 Fatimid khalifat proclaimed at Kairwan.
- 910 Foundation of Abbey of Cluny.  
Magyars defeat Lewis the Child.
- 911 Lewis d. Conrad I of Franconia elected German k.  
Lorraine joins the Carolingian kingdom of France.  
Treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte; Rollo duke of Normandy.
- 912 Abd er-Rahman III emir of Cordova.
- 915 Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus succeeds Leo VI.
- 918 Saracens in Campania crushed; Berengar emperor.  
Conrad I d. Henry I the Fowler of Saxony German king.
- 919 Romanus I co-emperor with the boy Constantine.
- 923 Charles the Simple deposed; Rudolf of Burgundy k. of France. Lorraine reverts to Germany.
- 924 Henry I makes nine years' truce with Magyars.
- 925 Athelstan king of England.
- 928 Abd er-Rahman III assumes Khalifat of the West.
- 933 Egypt independent under the Ikshidids.  
Henry I wars successfully with Magyars.
- 936 Rudolf d. Louis IV d'Outremer recalled and made k. of France by Hugh the Great, count of Paris.  
Henry I d. His son Otto I German king.
- 937 Athelstan shatters a northern coalition at Brunanburh.
- 942 Otto I reconciled with his brother Henry, who is made duke of Bavaria.
- 945 Romanus I deposed; Constantine sole emperor.  
Bouids establish supremacy at Bagdad, while maintaining Abbasid khalifs, for a century.
- 948 Rudolf son of Otto I made duke of Swabia.
- 950 Advance of Leon and Castile against Saracens.
- 951 Otto I annexes Italy.
- 952 Rebellion of Rudolf and Conrad of Lorraine.
- 954 Lothair succeeds Louis IV.
- 955 Otto I reconciled with German rebels. Decisive defeat of Magyars at Lechfeld.
- 956 Hugh the Great, duke of France, succeeded by Hugh Capet.
- 958 Edgar the Peaceful k. of England. Dunstan minister.
- 959 Constantine VII d. Romanus II emperor.
- 961 Romanus recovers Crete from Saracens; Syrian campaign.  
Otto I goes to Italy to restore order.  
Otto crowned emperor at Rome.
- 962 Otto deposes Pope John XII; makes Leo VIII pope.
- 963 Romanus II d. Nicephorus Phocas emperor, with the children Basil II and Constantine VIII.
- 965 Nicephorus recovers Cyprus from Saracens.
- 968 Nicephorus recovers Antioch.
- 969 Fatimid khalifat established in Egypt.  
John Zimisce murders Nicephorus and becomes co-emperor. Russians under Sviatoslav invade Bulgaria and Thrace.
- 971 Zimisce defeats Russians; Russian treaty.
- 972 Marriage of Theophano and Otto II.
- 973 Otto I d. Otto II succeeds.
- 975 Sancho the Great succeeds to Navarre, which he makes the leading Christian power in Spain.  
Syrian campaign of John Zimisce.
- 976 Zimisce d. Basil II reigns till 1025.
- 978 Otto II demonstrates in France.
- 979 Ethelred the Redeless ('Unready') king of England.
- 980 Lothair surrenders all claims in Lorraine.
- 982 Otto II's campaigns and defeat in Calabria.
- 983 Otto II d. Theophano regent for Otto III.
- 986 Lothair d. Louis V, last Carolingian.
- 987 Louis V. d. Hugh Capet elected king of France.  
Beginning of Capet dynasty.
- 991 Olaf Trygvesson raids England.
- 992 Sagnel k. of Bulgaria, begins Bulgarian war.  
Boleslav duke of Poland; founds Polish kingdom.
- 994 Olaf and Sweyn Fork-beard raid England.
- 995 Robert II succeeds Hugh as king of France.  
Otto III in Italy; makes Gregory V (Bruno) pope.
- 997 Stephen (Saint) king of Hungary.
- 998 Mahmud of Ghazni succeeds Sabuktigin.
- 999 Sylvester II (Gerbert) pope. Reforming activity.
- 1000 Leif the Norseman discovers Labrador.
- 1001 Mahmud's first invasion of Punjab.
- 1002 Massacre of Danes in England on St. Brice's day.  
Otto III d. Henry II (of Bavaria) German king.  
Sweyn Fork-beard of Denmark invades England.
- 1003 Sweyn king of Denmark and England.
- 1012 Canute king of Denmark and England.  
Henry II crowned emperor at Rome.
- 1014 Basil II destroys the Bulgar army; he is named Bulgaroctonus, 'the Bulgar-slayer.'
- 1017 Norman adventurers in Italy take part against the Byzantines in the south.  
End of first Bulgar kingdom.
- 1018 Armenian campaigns of Basil II.
- 1024 Henry II d. Conrad II 'the Salic' German king.  
(Salian line of emperors.)
- 1025 Basil d. Constantine VIII sole emperor.
- 1028 Canute adds Norway to his Scandinavian empire.  
Constantine d. Zoe with Romanus II succeeds.
- 1030 Mahmud of Ghazni d. His dominion breaks up.
- 1031 Henry I king of France.
- 1033 Burgundy (Arles) incorporated with Germany.
- 1034 Romanus III d. Zoe with Michael IV.
- 1035 Sancho the Great d.  
Canute d. Partition of his empire.  
William the Conqueror (aged eight) duke of Normandy.
- 1039 Conrad II d. Henry III German king.
- 1042 Michael IV d. Zoe with Constantine IX.  
Edward the Confessor king of England.
- 1045 Three rival popes. Rome appeals to emperor.
- 1046 Henry deposes all three popes; names Clement II.
- 1048 Henry nominates Bruno to Papacy; Bruno, having made canonical election a condition of acceptance, becomes Leo IX. Very active reform inaugurated.
- 1052 Hungarian independence acknowledged.
- 1053 Normans in alliance with Papacy after defeating Leo at Civitate.
- 1054 Theodora empress at Constantinople.
- 1055 Victor II pope.
- 1056 Henry III d. Henry IV German king. Regency.
- 1057 Isaac Comnenus Eastern emperor.
- 1058 Malcolm III, having overthrown Macbeth, establishes the royal line of Scotland.
- 1059 Nicholas II pope. Lateran Council establishes College of Cardinals as papal electors.  
Isaac Comnenus retires: Constantine X Ducas.
- 1060 Seljuk Turks under Tughril master Bagdad as protectors of Abbasid khalif. Fall of Bouids.  
Philip I king of France.  
Nicholas makes Robert Guiscard duke of Apulia.  
First invasion of Sicily by Roger.  
Tughril invades Armenia.
- 1061 Alexander II pope, without reference to Henry.  
German bishops elect antipope Honorius.
- 1063 Alp Arslan succeeds Tughril as Great Sultan.
- 1066 Hastings. William of Normandy k. of England.
- 1067 Romanus IV co-emperor with Michael VII.
- 1071 Norman conquest of England completed.  
Normans in Italy take Bari, ending Byzantine occupation.  
Romanus defeated at Manzikert by Alp Arslan, who is succeeded as Seljuk sultan by Malik Shah.
- 1073 Sulayman takes Nicaea. Hildebrand elected pope as Gregory VII.

## Chronicle XVII

# THE NATIONS IN BEING : 867-1073

**U**N<sup>TIL</sup> the year 867 Christendom was at least in theory one. Now, however, two articles of the creed which the West regarded as fundamental were condemned by the East as essentially heretical; and the breach thus made could in no wise be healed. Yet the full significance of the event was not immediately apparent. The prominent fact in the second half of the ninth century was not that the separation between East and West was a little more marked, but that the Western Empire of Charlemagne was in process of disintegration, and that the process was being hastened by the attacks of sea-going powers, Saracen or Scandinavian.

Now the Western Empire—excluding, that is, the subjugated but not incorporated Slavs and Avars on the east—was clearly a combination of three distinct groups: the Italian which was Latin with no more than a vein of German running through it; the Gallic, also Latin with a difference, but with a distinct tincture of German; and the German with the merest tincture of Latin. Moreover, these groups correspond to genuine geographical areas. The Italian is separated from both the others by the barrier of the Alpine mountain passes. North of the Alps there is no equivalent barrier between the Gallic or French group on the west and the German group on the east, though the Rhine may be regarded as providing a line of demarcation.

### Source of innumerable Wars

**C**ONSEQUENTLY, between German and Gallic lay a broad belt from the Alps to the North Sea which belonged definitely to neither group, but had affinities with both. In the first stage of disintegration, this belt appears as a fourth division artificially attached to the Italian. But that is a connexion which cannot be preserved because of the geographical barrier; there is no natural unity in the group

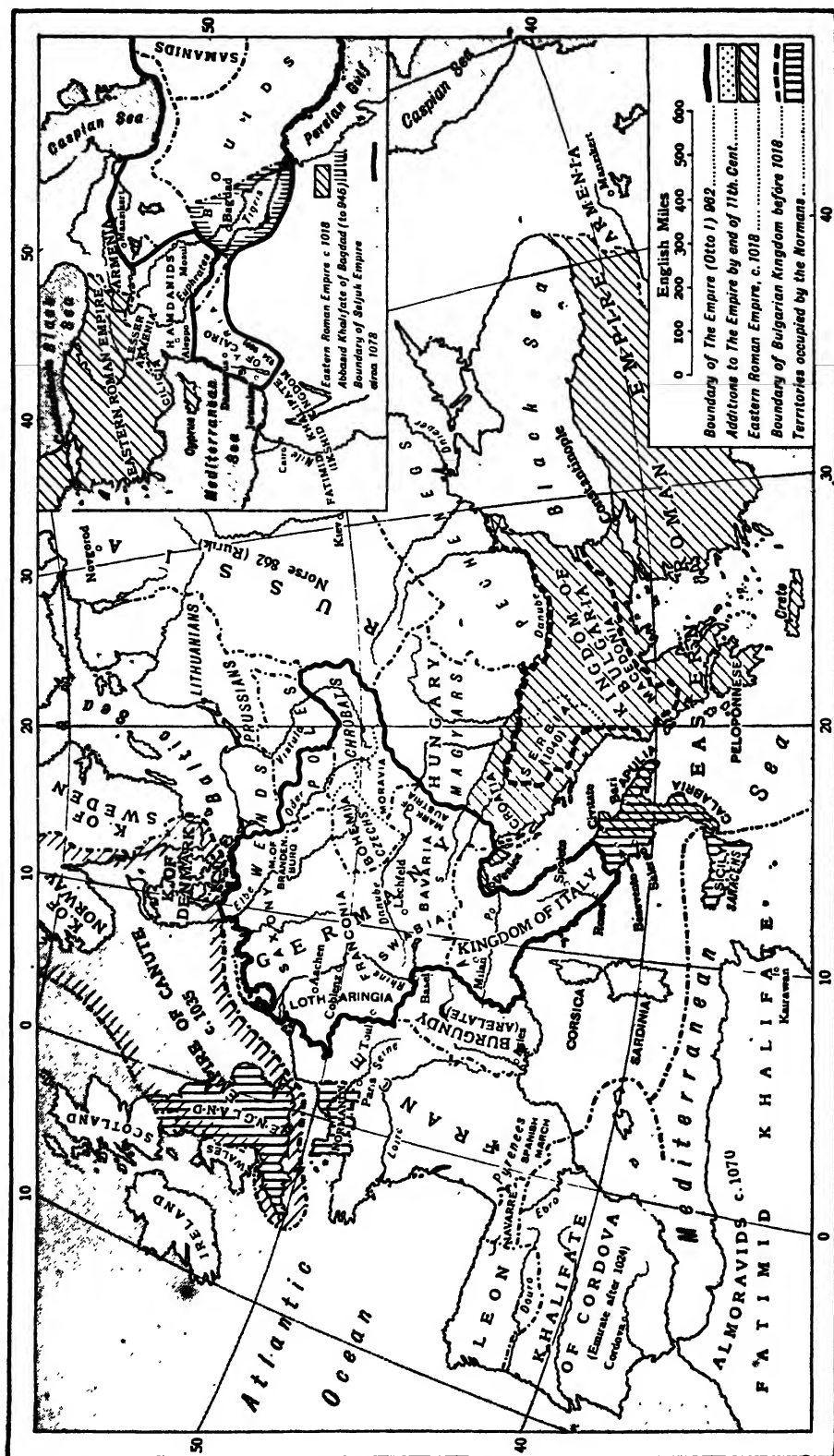
itself; it breaks up, and the sections tend to absorption in either the Gallic or the German group—a process which was to be a main source of innumerable wars.

We saw that by agreement between the three surviving sons of Louis the Pious the Middle Kingdom with Italy and the imperial dignity went to the eldest, Lothair, and his heirs, the east to Lewis the German and the west to Charles the Bald; and that on Lothair's death in 855 his realm was at once cloven in three between his sons, the eldest, the emperor Lewis II, taking Italy. That realm was never reunited, for Lewis was fully occupied in Italy till his death (without male issue) in 875; his youngest brother was already dead and his kingdom of Provence had been annexed (in 863) by Charles the Bald; and on the death of the third brother, Lothair II, in 869, his northern kingdom of Lotharingia became a bone of contention between the uncles Charles the Bald and Lewis the German. In 875 the male line of the senior branch of the Carolingians or Karlings, the house of Lothair I, has already come to an end.

### Endless Partitions of the Empire

**A**T this point Charles the Bald annexes the title of emperor and the kingdom of Italy. Next year (876) Lewis the German dies, and his German kingdom is divided between his three legitimate sons. Next year (877) dies Charles, the last of the sons of Louis the Pious, leaving his whole realm to his one son, Louis II of France, who dies in 879, leaving two sons, Louis III and Carloman; a third (known as Charles the Simple) was born after his death.

There is a rapid succession of deaths, until in 884 the legitimate king of France is the child Charles the Simple; Provence has set up as a separate kingdom under Boson, who claimed it in right of his wife, the daughter of the emperor Lewis II; of the sons of Lewis the German, only one is surviving, Charles the Fat, who is now



# REDISTRIBUTION OF THE PEOPLES OF EUROPE AFTER THE BREAK-UP OF THE CAROLINGIAN EMPIRE

Geographical as well as racial facts largely determined the resettlement of western Europe after the disintegration of the Empire of Charlemagne. In the west was Gallic France, separated by the Rhine from Teutonic Germany and by the Pyrenees from the Iberian Peninsula now under Mahomedan dominion. The Danube provided the northern boundary of the Eastern Roman Empire, in which the Serbian and Bulgarian kingdoms had been absorbed. Northmen from Scandinavia reached France, there to become the Normans who gave England her kings and founded the Norman kingdom of Sicily.

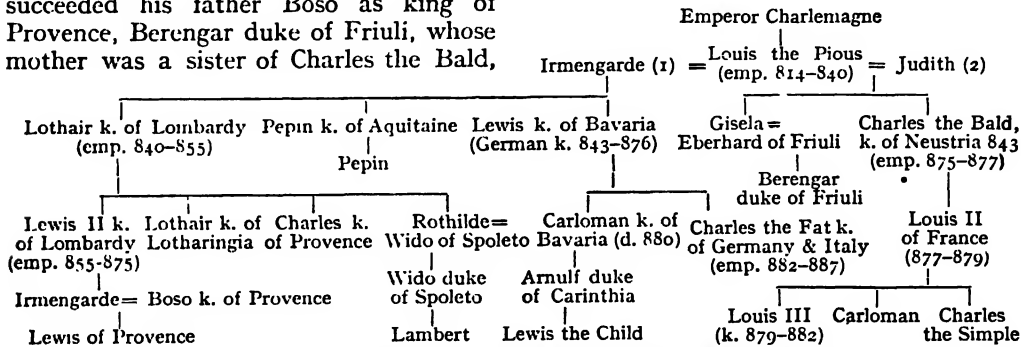
## The Nations in Being

king of Germany, king of Italy, and emperor. Charles the Fat and Charles the Simple are the only legitimate Karlings in the male line left. Rather than face the dangers of a regency, France offers her crown to Charles the Fat, who thus for three unhappy years becomes the last sole king of all the Franks.

In 887 Charles the Fat died, immediately after surrendering his German crown to his nephew Arnulf, duke of Carinthia, the illegitimate son of his dead elder brother. Charles the Simple, now eight years old, was the sole legitimate Karling in the male line; but, besides the illegitimate Arnulf, there were three princes whose mothers were Karlings—Lewis who at this moment succeeded his father Boso as king of Provence, Berengar duke of Friuli, whose mother was a sister of Charles the Bald,

in 911. Berengar won the Italian crown in 901 and the imperial title in 915, but died without an heir in 924. So vanished all who could even pretend to the name of Karling, save the uncertain occupant of the French throne; and for seven years after the death of Charles, the reigning king of France was not his son but Rudolf of Burgundy.

An aimless, wearisome, meaningless welter! But it is the inevitable outcome of that utterly destructive principle of divided inheritance from which the Frank tradition could not shake itself free. Germany has worked back to its own peculiar principle of an elective



### FAMILY COMPLICATIONS OF THE CAROLINGIAN IMPERIAL HOUSE

and Wido (Guido) duke of Spoleto, whose mother was sister of the emperor Lewis II. All the four and also Lambert the son of Wido were at one time crowned emperors.

But the actual immediate result of the death of Charles the Fat was that the one legitimate Karling fled to England, the French nobles electing as their king one of their own number, Odo count of Paris; the Germans got, what they much needed, a vigorous and capable king in Arnulf; Wido and Berengar fought for the Italian crown; and a Burgundian count, Rudolf, set up a little independent kingdom of Upper Burgundy on the upper Rhône. One or another of the princes might enjoy the title of emperor; but disintegration was complete.

Charles the Simple was restored in 899 and reigned at intervals for the next thirty years; the lines of Spoleto and Provence ended in 899 and 907; Arnulf died in 899, his only heir Lewis the Child

monarchy which still recognizes preferential hereditary claims, France to the principle of a hereditary monarchy which may under extreme pressure give place to election; while in both the power of the monarch is closely circumscribed by a powerful nobility, consisting of territorial magnates, which has become hereditary.

But there was another effect of the welter. It allowed not a conquest but a penetration of France by the Northmen which materially influenced her future development by transmuting Vikings into Normans; and at a later stage this Norman development in France had an immense influence on the development of England, of Italy and of Western civilization—see Chapters 100, 104 and 105.

On the other hand, during the half-century under immediate consideration, from 867 to 918, the Northman had not yet become a Norman; he was one of the barbaric forces which were increasing



the welter. By the end of the half-century he had established his footing in France, where alone he was to be transformed into a Norman; he had established his footing in England; he had been beaten off in Germany; and he was establishing himself on the border of the Eastern Empire as the Varangian or Russian, the name which was later to be transferred to the Slavonic or Mongolian tribes whom he was now dominating.

## Effect of the Northmen's Raids

**M**OST noteworthy, however, is an effect of the raids, as distinguished from the settlement, of the Northmen. The various kings of the house of the Carolingians were so much occupied in snatching territory from each other that they never concentrated their energies on meeting the peril from the marauders; the worst offender being Charles the Bald, who, in order to go fighting elsewhere, deliberately bought them off when he had them almost at his mercy—a very effective method of inviting them to return. Consequently the local nobles were left to protect their lands and their dependants as best they could. The 'hosts' of the Northmen fought as a highly mobile mounted infantry, planting palisaded camps from which the raiders issued and to which they retreated. The nobles countered with troops of heavy cavalry, while they developed their own headquarters into strongholds impregnable to assault. Hence the noble's house became literally a castle, and he himself became the permanent captain of a troop of heavy cavalry.

Reunion of the France which developed from the Neustria of the Franks with the Germany which was the expansion of Austrasia was out of the question. When Charles the Fat died, a strong chief was an absolute necessity, and she elected not Charles' illegitimate German successor, but the valiant warrior who had saved Paris from the Northmen, Odo or Eudes the count of Paris, from whose brother descended the line which ultimately took the place of the Karlings.

Odo held the crown till his death, but he had to fight hard for it in his latter years, which demonstrated the insecurity of the

title by election. The great nobles would not submit to a king who was only one of themselves with no ancestral claim to superiority. They made a figure-head of the young Carolingian Charles, the posthumous son of Charles the Bald, to whom they restored the crown but not the authority when Odo died on New Year's eve, 898, since Odo's brother Robert did not choose to contest the succession. It was therefore Charles the Simple who in 911 made terms with the Viking Rollo or Rolf and, under the treaty of S. Clair-sur-Epte, settled him with his followers in Normandy, there to become well-nigh the mightiest of all the feudatory nobles.

In the same year died Arnulf's son, Lewis the Child. Germany had to revert to election and chose Conrad of Franconia, while Lotharingia, clinging to the idea of a Karling, gave its allegiance to Charles the Simple. Since the death of Arnulf there had been no leadership; the Slavs were surging into German lands, and a new group of eastern barbarians, the Magyars, who had overrun the Avars, were threatening Bavaria.

Throughout the nominal reign of Lewis the Child (899-911) and that of Conrad (911-918) the German nobles were fighting each other for their own hand, or singly and unsupported against the barbarian invaders. But on Conrad's death, the Franconian house was public-spirited enough to withdraw its own claim to the succession and give its support to its rival, Saxony; and Henry the Fowler, duke of Saxony, became king of the Germans (918-936). The task which he discharged was that of making ready for the revival of the Holy Roman Empire under the German kings by his son Otto the Great.

## Danish Invasions of England

**D**URING this half-century Harold Fairhair was building up in Norway the monarchy of which the story is told in Chapter 96. There also it may be read how the Vikings who raided the coasts and estuaries of France and penetrated into the Mediterranean went not by command of either the Norse or the Danish king, but very largely to escape from the yoke which those kings were endeavouring

## The Nations in Being

to lay upon them. So it was also with the Danes, who in 866 were taking the first step in their great invasion of England.

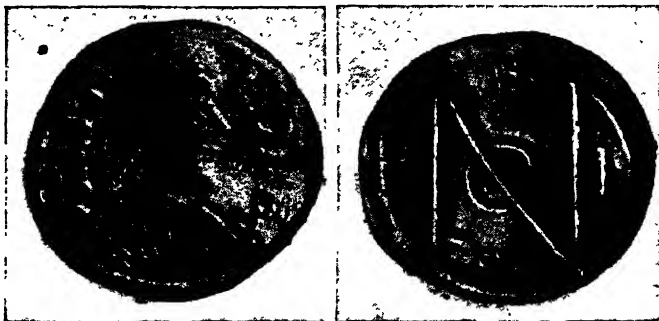
Ethelred of Wessex, third of the sons of the pious Ethelwulf, had just succeeded to the overkingship of England. The Danish hosts directed their opening attack not on Wessex but on the sub-kingdoms of East Anglia and Northumbria. In 867 they mastered Northumbria; after a pause they overran East Anglia and slew the king, S. Edmund, in 870. Then they fell upon Wessex. The year 871 is known as the Year of Battles; on the whole the Danes would seem to have had rather the worse of the fighting. There was a truce and they fell back from Wessex, though not without a handsome subsidy.

Alfred, the fourth brother, had succeeded Ethelred during the year, and had more than enough to do in organizing recuperation from the desperate struggle. The Danes, too, had more than enough in making good their conquest of the north and extending it into Mercia. In 876 began the decisive struggle which after alternating vicissitudes was ended by Alfred's victory at Ethandune and the Treaty of Wedmore in 878 confirmed in 884 by 'Guthrum's Fryth' (see the map in page 2410), of which the treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte was to be the French counterpart.

By the treaty the Danes held what they had conquered—roughly the lands east and north of the great road called Watling Street, from the River Lea in the south-east to the River Dee in the north-west, known thereafter as the Danelaw, while they became officially Christians and in some sort acknowledged the overlordship of Wessex. After that the land enjoyed comparative peace, since the Danish colony for the most part declined to help their countrymen in attacks on Wessex, and Wessex itself was so organized by its extremely sagacious and far-sighted king that it could hold its own securely both by sea and land against any attack that

could be brought against it; though Alfred's very able son Edward the Elder and his sons after him did not find it an easy matter to convert their shadowy overlordship into definite sovereignty.

Alfred was an extremely practical statesman, who created a fleet which beat the sea-rovers on their own element, codified the laws so as to harmonise



LONDON PENNY OF ALFRED THE GREAT

Succeeding his brother Ethelred as king of Wessex in 871, Alfred (849–901) was saddled with the task of quelling the Danes. By 878 he had forced on them the treaty of Wedmore, and by 885 had captured London, where this penny was struck bearing the monogram 'Londinia' on the reverse.

*British Museum*

diversities of custom, modified them so as to bring them into conformity with the most advanced ideas of justice, fostered education with a judicious zeal and set the highest standards of public and private morality; an idealist who could face adversity and apparent failure indomitably and victoriously, yet had the courage to recognize practical limitations instead of shutting his eyes to them. When he died in 900 he left his England at a height of prosperity and security such as no other land enjoyed; not yet unified, indeed, but much nearer to unity than it had ever been before, or than any contemporary kingdom. That is a record which fully justifies the title of 'The Great,' bestowed on him alone among English monarchs out of the love of his people.

THOUGH the Northmen were already raiding the Mediterranean shores, the Saracen was still the main menace in the south. In the west, Charles Martel had stopped the onrush; Pepin had driven it back over the Pyrenees; Charlemagne had

pressed it across the Ebro, while the stubborn invincibles of the old population, Gothic, Roman and Iberian, held out defiantly in Asturias, the north-west corner. The Spanish March was still nominally a province of the Frank dominion, but was on the way to become the independent Christian kingdom of Aragon.

In the ninth century, however, there was little co-operation between the Frankish governors of the March and the Gothic princes of the west. The leaders who were step by step forcing the Saracens southward, making the Douro a boundary corresponding to the Ebro, were the Alfonsos (Gothic *Hildefuns*) of Asturias and the Gascon Sancho, who among them were creating Leon, Castile and Navarre when the ninth century closed. The factions among the Mahomedans paralysed the emir at Córdoba for effective resistance to the slowly creeping tide: though in 928 Abd er-Rahman III assumed officially the title of khalif. The Aglabids were firmly established in Sicily. Their advance in South Italy, when it threatened to become an effective conquest, was held up by the emperor Lewis II in spite of the difficulties in which he was involved by the Lombard dukes of Salerno and Benevento. But their expulsion was still unaccomplished when he died prematurely in 875. The task, however, was taken up by Basil the Macedonian, emperor of the East, the titular emperors and kings in the West being otherwise occupied.

### Eastern Empire and the Saracens

**B**ASIL's fleets drove the Corsairs off the seas; his armies swept the Saracens out of Calabria; but in Sicily he failed altogether, and he too died in 886, before he could expel them from Campania; nor was there anyone left to carry on the work when he was gone. There the Saracens remained; and if Italy was not conquered, it was mainly because they were satisfied with robbery and loot and were at no pains to organize a dominion. The Papacy, which in conjunction with Lewis had played no small part in the battle, was now falling upon evil days, successive popes proving themselves nothing more than most unspiritual faction leaders or agents. It was not

till 916 that Berengar, emperor at last, made common cause with the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento and blotted out the Saracen hornets' nest in Campania.

Basil had made himself emperor by murdering the man who had raised him to power while his victim lay in a drunken sleep; a piece of villainy which proved highly profitable to the Empire. He reorganized the finances; he directed the administration with vigour and substantial justice; he recovered territories, long lost in the east, from the tottering Khalifate; he rescued South Italy from the Saracens; his fleets recaptured the mastery of the Mediterranean; he so rehabilitated the government that its machinery again worked with automatic success through the long reigns of princes who took little interest in their duties.

Basil's son Leo the Wise (886-912) justified his title by writing a manual on tactics and making himself, like that monarch who was described seven centuries later as 'the wisest fool in Christendom,' an authority on witchcraft. But the Empire prospered. Constantine Porphyrogenitus (912-959) became emperor at the age of five, and was officially or unofficially set aside or reinstated at intervals; commerce and the arts of peace flourished, and still the Empire enjoyed an inglorious prosperity; for its machinery was adequate to hold the European barbarians on its borders in check, and the power of Bagdad had lapsed into a woeful decrepitude. Neither in the East nor in Europe was there any serious onslaught to be combated.

Deferring, then, the story of Mahomedan disintegration, we turn back to that of the reintegration of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire.

### The Germanic Holy Roman Empire

**T**HE complete disappearance of the Karling line in Germany compelled either the dissolution of the German kingdom into its component parts or the election of a new head. Germany was in five great divisions or dukedoms: Saxony on the north, Franconia and Lotharingia on the west, Swabia on the south-west, Bavaria on the south-east, corresponding to fairly marked racial distinctions, Franconia and

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Lotharingia being mainly Frankish. But Lotharingia was disposed to hold by the western Carolingian rather than depart from the Carolingian tradition. For the time it joined itself to France, though its stronger German affinities pulled it back to the German kingdom before long. The Franks, however, had an historic claim to hegemony among the Germans. The fact was recognized in the election of Conrad duke of Franconia as German king.

The Frank prestige, however, proved from the beginning an insufficient basis for the authority over the other dukes necessary to a strong monarchy. Conrad on his death-bed pointed out the man best fitted to discharge the supreme office, and it was Conrad's own brother and heir who in 918 nominated that man, Henry of Saxony, as Conrad's successor, and stood by him with unflinching loyalty.

The election was justified by the event. The new king was fully aware that premature attempts to enforce an unestablished authority conferred on him not as a right, but by the doubtful acquiescence of three magnates, each of whom was otherwise as powerful as himself, would merely plunge Germany into a prolonged civil war, the issue of which would be extremely doubtful. He had himself defied Conrad's dictation, and both Swabia and Bavaria would certainly defy dictation from him. He left them in practical independence, though formally they were in his allegiance, till his personal achievements had manifestly warranted his title. Happily for him, and much to the credit of the Franconian nobles, he could count securely upon them in his primary task, the defence of the North German marches against Slavs and Magyars; while the Danes found other occupation than attacks on Saxony, which had already proved a harder nut than they could crack. •

### Magyar inroads into Bavaria

THE Magyars were of a Mongolian—that is, a non-Aryan—stock. They had made their way to South Russia, and thence, pushed westward by the pressure of the Petcheneg Turks, had driven their way into the old land of the Avars, which became their permanent home—the famous Bulgar king, Simeon, having very effec-

tively stopped their movement over the Danube—at the close of the ninth century, led by their own national hero Arpad; they had broken into Italy in 899; and from the first years of the tenth century they had turned their devastating attention mainly on Bavaria. While Lewis the Child was German king they inflicted a heavy defeat on the Bavarian duke, and another on the forces led by the boy-king himself a year before his death. In the days of Conrad the quarrels of the Bavarian and Swabian dukes with the elected king left South Germany almost undefended, and the squadrons of the Magyar horsemen penetrated as far as Coblenz and even Basel.

It was not until 924 that the Magyars made the first onslaught on North Germany, to find that Henry the Fowler was their match. He did not indeed beat them decisively, but they were glad to make a nine years' truce on terms of a tribute being paid to them; which suited Henry for the time because of trouble with Gorm the Old, king of Denmark, and with the Wends between the Elbe and the Oder.

### The Mark of Brandenburg

HAVING thus temporarily disposed of the Magyars, Henry completed a settlement with Gorm, who had to pay him tribute, and proceeded to the subjugation of the Wends. It was perhaps in the organization of the new march which he annexed, the 'Mark of Brandenburg,' that Henry rendered his most valuable defensive service to Germany. All over the new districts he planted his Saxons and Franks on the soil, the centre of each colony being a new walled town within which a tenth of the colonists resided to form a standing garrison, the other colonists being responsible for the maintenance of the garrison's farms; while quarters were provided in the towns to which the farmers could retreat when necessary. Henry, who married his son Otto to an English princess, may have derived the idea from the garrison towns planted in England by Alfred, which became the local centres of trade without the artificial encouragements that the German king was at pains to add. For the trading centres were an object secondary only to the provision of garrisons.

The garrison towns proved as effective a discouragement to the Magyar raids, when they were renewed on the conclusion of the truce and the refusal of the tribute, as Alfred's and Edward's in their conflict with the Danes. Henry's frontiers were so strengthened that he was able to make his authority more decisively felt in the southern and western duchies—for Lotharingia had reverted to Germany when the western kingdom set Rudolf of Burgundy on its throne; but caution still forbade him to challenge needless antagonism on the part of the dukes. It was left to his son to complete the establishment of the central authority.

## Accession of Otto the Great

**H**ENRY never claimed the imperial title, though he stands in the list of the emperors as Henry I. At his death in 936 he nominated as his successor his eldest legitimate son, Otto I the Great (936-973), born shortly before his father's election to the royal dignity. An elder illegitimate son, Thankmar, was passed over, and Otto was preferred to his younger brother Henry, for whom it was possible to claim priority of title on the ground that he was born 'in the purple,' the son of a reigning king, not of a mere duke. Consequently the first years of Otto's reign were spent in fighting for his crown against the rebellious brothers, while his bold assertion of the supreme authority, over which his father had been so cautious, carried strong antagonistic elements to the side of the rebels.

Otto was a zealous and pious churchman, but of the type of Charlemagne, not of Louis the Pious. That is, he never dreamed of subordinating his own to ecclesiastical authority. The prelates were the natural allies of the crown against the pretensions of the hereditary lay lords, who were as jealous of their privileges as of royal encroachments. Otto was strong enough and self-confident enough to give all possible ecclesiastical pomp and ceremony to his coronation at Aachen; though his cautious sire had firmly declined to do so lest it should be claimed that the crown had been bestowed on him by the Church. Otto would have made short work of any such suggestion.

The rebellion of Otto's brothers was the outcome of the irritation of the dukes at Otto's uncompromising assertion of the royal authority, and of Saxon displeasure at his pan-German attitude. He declined to be a Saxon ruling over Franks and Bavarians, as his father had been; he chose to be the German head of a German nation without distinction between its component peoples. The brothers headed the revolt which broke out in Saxony in 938, and were soon joined by the dukes of Franconia, Bavaria and Lotharingia. Thankmar soon died, but the struggle was maintained with varying fortunes till 941, when Henry made final submission and was generously enough received into the king's favour.

In the course of the contest three of the dukes had fallen; the victorious Otto appropriated Franconia, made his pardoned brother Henry duke of Bavaria, bestowed Lotharingia on his own son-in-law, the Frank Conrad the Red, and made his own eldest but still very youthful son Ludolf duke of Swabia, Henry and Ludolf each marrying the daughter or sister of his predecessor in the dukedom. But, though all the dukes were members of the royal family, they were without the privileges of which Henry the Fowler had not ventured to deprive the earlier dukes, and in each duchy there was a count palatine, an officer appointed by the crown to safeguard its own interests. Otto was very unmistakably king of the Germans.

## Magyar Menace disposed of

**E**VERTHELESS, though much more under control than before, the new dukes were still not very far removed from being independent sovereigns, and resented the curtailment of their powers. The rival ambitions of Henry and young Ludolf in Italy led to the intervention of Otto; Otto's intervention, to the detriment of Ludolf's plans, spurred Ludolf to revolt against his father in a coalition with Conrad of Lotharingia and the archbishop of Mainz; a civil war raged during 953; and though the rebels made submission, the Magyars seized the opportunity to develop an invasion of Germany in force. It was their last. In the face of the

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common menace, the Germans united; and Otto shattered the Magyar army at the decisive battle of Lechfeld (955). As in the north among the Wends, a new march was organized, the Ostmark—Austria. Lechfeld stayed the Magyar menace once for all.

In Italy, whither the quarrel of Ludolf and Henry had drawn him, Otto had rescued a princess in distress and taken her to be his second wife. The lady was Adelaide of Burgundy, the fair widow of Lothair of Provence, who had died while fighting with Berengar of Ivrea, the grandson of the emperor Berengar, for the crown of Italy. Berengar took her prisoner; she appealed to the dukes of Bavaria and Swabia; both came to her aid, but as rivals, not as colleagues, each intent on winning the Italian crown for himself. Otto, having no mind to let a German duke become king of Italy, intervened himself, released Adelaide and married her, gave the crown to Berengar as his vassal and a border district of Friuli to Henry of Bavaria (951), and very soon after, as we have seen, found himself at war with his own disappointed son.

The battle with the Magyars effected a general reconciliation. But in Otto's absence quarrels arose between Berengar and Pope John XII. John appealed to Otto, and Otto, having already decided that he must have the Papacy at his disposal for his own ecclesiastical ends in Germany, seized his opportunity. Berengar retreated, Otto entered Rome, and John discovered that he had called to his aid not a servant but a master.

### Imperial Mastery over the Papacy

**J**OHNN, as a matter of course, acceded to Otto's demand that he should be crowned emperor (962); the emperor Otto proceeded to confirm the Papacy in possession of all the lands that had been conveyed or secured to it, known as the Patrimony of S. Peter, but with reservation of the imperial supremacy, and with a further declaration that no papal election was valid till the candidate had taken the oath of allegiance to the emperor. Also he demanded and received John's sanction for certain ecclesiastical measures to which most of the German bishops were



OTTO II AND THEOPHANO

Constant warfare troubled the reign of Otto II (955-983), who succeeded his father, Otto the Great, as German king and emperor in 973. This ivory diptych shows him with his Byzantine wife Theophano, daughter of Romanus II.

*Cluny Museum; photo, Giraudon*

vehemently opposed. Then Otto marched against Berengar, with whom John began at once to intrigue against his new oppressor. Otto returned to Rome, deposed John on a variety of well-founded criminal charges, and set up a new pope, Leo VIII. As soon as Otto's back was turned, John reappeared in Rome, ejected Leo, and died. But the successor elected by John's party made abject submission and was promptly banished, while Otto's pope, Leo, was reinstated. Before Otto left Italy he had the young son (Otto II) whom Adelaide had borne to him crowned emperor also (967), Ludolf having died ten years earlier.

Otto at the end of his long and strenuous reign was a potentate far more powerful than any known since Charlemagne. He had mastered the dukes; he had mastered



**OTTO III : IMPERIAL MYSTIC AND DREAMER**

This miniature from a copy of the Gospels at Munich belonging to Otto III (980-1002) depicts that emperor enthroned with priests and knights beside him and suggests his devotional character. An idealist who tried to revive the old conception of the Roman Empire, he proved inadequate to his position.

*From Schlumberger, 'L'épopée byzantine' (Hachette)*

the Papacy. He had extended and organized the marches of the Empire under counts owing no allegiance to the dukes but directly responsible to the crown. He had finally disposed of the Magyar menace and the Slavs beyond the borders paid him tribute. In his very last days he procured as bride for his son a princess of the Eastern Empire, Theophano, who brought as her dower the Italian lands that had hitherto remained in the Byzantine allegiance.

In 973 Otto the Great died in Germany, by no means an old man. The son who succeeded him, Otto II (973-983), was only eighteen, and his capacities were unproved. Naturally his cousin, the second Henry ('the Quarrelsome') of Bavaria, was in rebellion before long because another Otto, the son of Ludolf, was placed in the vacant dukedom of Swabia,

which the Bavarian house hoped to dominate. Henry was beaten and took refuge in Bohemia, while half his duchy was parted into margravates (march counties). Having established his authority in Germany, Otto made a demonstration in France at the head of a large army, mainly to frighten the young king Lothair, who had presumed to claim Lotharingia with its traditional affection for the Carolingian house, which had been restored in France on the death of Rudolf of Burgundy, who had reigned there from 929 to 936. Then Otto II turned to Italy (980), where the Crescenti were seeking to dominate the Papacy.

Otto suppressed the Crescenti, and then set about the conquest of South Italy, in one part of which the Greek towns were showing no disposition to accept their transfer from the Eastern to the Western Empire, while in another the Saracens were still in possession. In 981 and 982 he achieved a series of

successes till he was ambushed and most of his force cut to pieces in Calabria. He himself made an adventurous escape, and the disaster only roused him, and the Italians and Germans alike, to a fresh united effort in what was now regarded as a sacred war. Only Venice caused delay by declining to provide the necessary ships, having profitable commercial relations with the Saracens; and Otto died suddenly in 983, at the age of twenty-eight, before the preparations for the great campaign were completed. The infant Otto III (983-1002) had already been solemnly elected to the succession.

**T**HE regency was placed with the widow Theophano. The emperor's death prevented the prosecution of the Saracen war; Henry the Quarrelsome reappeared; bishops dominated the situation, and



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though very far from being in accord with each other they did succeed in effecting an uneasy pacification till the young emperor came of age and proceeded to Rome for his official coronation by the pope in 996.

Otto, half German and half Greek, bred under the tutelage of Bishop Bernard of Hildesheim, a scholar and a fervent Cluniac, was a born idealist with a vivid imagination, an active and receptive brain and the unmeasured enthusiasm of sixteen for his ideals. He was accompanied on his Italian journey by his dearest friend, an idealist as ardent as himself, and not much older, his cousin Bruno. While they were on the way the pope died. On Otto's nomination Bruno was forthwith elected pope as Gregory V. Gregory crowned Otto emperor, and the youthful pair started confidently to set the world to rights in accordance with their somewhat visionary ideals.

Three years later Gregory died, but Otto had ready to take his place Gerbert of Aurillac, a reformer no less ardent, but already advanced in years and long reputed to be so abnormally learned that he was suspected of being a wizard. So Gregory V was succeeded by Sylvester II. The emperor and the pope were thenceforth to rule the world in perfect harmony as God's vice-gerents, of course with the Holy and Imperial City as its centre. Kings would bow before them in acknowledgement of their divine mission and authority.

They did not reform the world. Otto died at two-and-twenty in 1002; Sylvester followed him to the grave next year. The emperor's Roman ideals were wholly incompatible with the needs of the German kingdom. The Papacy relapsed into the hands of the counts of Tusculum, as before it had relapsed into the hands

of the Crescenti. The next German king, Henry of Bavaria, the son of the 'Quarrelsome Duke,' was crowned as Emperor Henry II (1002-1024); but he belonged to the German kingdom and his relations with Italy were merely perfunctory. Otto had followed Otto till the dynasty had acquired the authority of hereditary prestige, but now there were no descendants of the first Otto in the male line; any new dynasty had to make a fresh start. The imperial title might help the Bavarian in Germany, but not if he tried, like the last Otto, to be an Italian instead of a German.

Henry was competent and imperturbable, just and tenacious, pious enough to earn the title of 'the Saint.' He



**HENRY II, THE SAINTLY 'KING OF THE ROMANS'**

Henry II (973-1024), 'The Saint,' was elected German king. This miniature from a manuscript at Munich shows him and his consort, Cunegonde, being presented to Christ by SS. Peter and Paul with, below them, Germany between Rome and Gaul. In 1014 Henry was crowned emperor.

From Schlumberger, 'L'épopée byzantine' (Hachette)

## Chronicle XVII. 867-1073

strengthened his borders and stabilised the government, preserving the peace and maintaining his authority—in Germany. But he left Italy alone; and he did not found a dynasty. His reign exemplified the uses of unimaginative efficiency; but it was undeniably commonplace.

The old divisional Five Nations of Germany still survived, but not as the old Five Dukedoms, each of which had been to some extent, at least, broken up; while throughout the last century the crown, without falling under clerical domination, had strengthened the prelates as against the lay magnates. On Henry's death there was no one with an outstanding claim to the succession, and it was, in effect, the bishops of the anti-Cluniac party who gave the crown to the Swabian Conrad II 'the Salic' (1024-1039) in preference to his cousin, Conrad of Carinthia, while it was largely the loyalty of the latter that enabled Conrad II to found a dynasty.

### Conrad founds a Dynasty

CONRAD made it his primary object to weaken the group, still a small one, of the greater nobles, by attaching the minor nobles directly to the crown, making the latter the 'king's men,' barons or vassals, over-riding or abolishing claims to their obedience on the part of the intermediary overlord, duke or count, to whom they were for the most part bound by the practice of 'commendation,' a mutual contract of protection and service. The method to which Conrad resorted was the application to the lesser barons of that principle of heredity on which the greater were laying such stress for themselves. Incidentally, the magnification of the theory of hereditary right fitted in with his own determination to make the kingship hereditary in his family. To that end he procured the coronation of his son, Henry, while still a boy.

The principal event of the reign was the inclusion in the Empire of the Arelate, Provence or Lower Burgundy, by contract with its last king, Rudolf III. The Arelate, most romantic of lands, was for centuries to be associated with neither France nor Italy, but Germany, and to be a buffer between the two Latin countries.

Conrad was thoroughly unpopular, and almost invariably successful. He proved himself master in Germany and Italy, and he compelled the Magyars in Hungary, the Czechs in Bohemia and the rising power of the Poles to acknowledge his sovereignty. When he died in 1039 he left to carry on his work a son young but carefully trained in both war and statecraft. Conrad's practical success was demonstrated when Henry III (1039-1056) assumed the reins of power unopposed and unchallenged.

In the seventeen years of his rule Henry the Black raised the Empire to the utmost height of power it ever attained. Poles, Czechs and Hungarians were subjected to a much more definite suzerainty, the first with little trouble, the other two not without hard work. The rapid and convincing subjugation of the east left the emperor free to deal with the problems of Germany and Italy. A man so strong as Henry could afford to be conciliatory where mildness in a weaker man would certainly have been misconstrued; the moral atmosphere, so to speak, was made healthier by the emperor's personality. He created public spirit by the sincerity of his own public spirit, immensely to the welfare of the whole community. No one suspected his magnanimity of being a cloak either for fear or for craft.

### Henry's Italian and Papal policy

MOST notable, however, were his dealings with Italy and the Papacy. Otto I had suppressed the Crescenti popes. Otto III had gone further and set two idealists, one a German, the other a Frenchman, in the chair of S. Peter; but relapse had followed the death of both emperors. The counts of Tusculum had taken the place of the Crescenti, and before the German king turned his attention to Italy the scandal had reached such a pitch that there were three rivals at once, each of them claiming to be the legitimate pope.

In 1046 Henry answered the appeal of a synod held in Rome. He came to Italy, took matters in hand himself, summoned two successive synods, at which all the three popes were deposed, and set the German bishop of Bamberg on the papal

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throne as Clement II, the first of that series which culminated with the election of Gregory VII in 1073. Clement died the next year, and his successor, Damasus, a few months later; and then a second Bruno—a cousin of the emperor, as the first had been—became pope as Leo IX (1048). Each pope was Henry's nominee and a German. And each was a man of marked ability, of high character, and imbued with a lofty conception of his spiritual responsibilities.

The great Henry died prematurely in 1056, not yet in his fortieth year. Once again the undisputed successor was a child of six, Henry IV. The loss was irreparable. No regency could carry the power and authority of the dead man. Lacking that strong controlling force and personal example, nobles and prelates fell to wrangling for power, especially prelates. The boy's mother, an admirable consort for a strong king, was quite incompetent to direct affairs.

Archbishop Anno of Cologne superseded her, Anno was superseded by Adalbert bishop of Bremen, Adalbert was again superseded by Anno, and Anno once more by Adalbert, while young Henry was tossed like a shuttlecock from one to the other, and grew up untrained, hot-headed and self-willed, and full of resentment against everyone who had exercised control over him. Before he was twenty desultory rebellions were breaking out. He did not, in fact, become free from tutelage till Adalbert's death in 1072, and by that time Germany was in a state of confusion, to remedy which would have taxed to the utmost a prince of far stronger character than Henry IV.

### Norman Adventurers in Italy

**NO**R was the condition of Italy any better. The last chance of consolidating a strong Lombard kingdom disappeared when the emperor Berengar died in 924. South Italy had been a cockpit for the rivalries of Lombard lords, Saracen chiefs and Greek governors. Otto the Great himself had failed to establish his authority. Otto II had been technically sovereign of all Italy, not only Lombard but also Greek, in virtue of his marriage with Theophano, the Saracens having no

recognizable status; but his first attempt to make his position good failed, and the second was strangled by his premature death. Otto III died before he had time to attempt giving practical effect to his ideals; Henry II ignored Italy; Italy almost ignored Conrad; and the energies of Henry III in the peninsula were limited to his drastic dealing with the papal problem. Further, since the second decade of the eleventh century the South Italian problem had taken a new aspect, due to the adventurers from Normandy.

The achievement of the Norman house of Hauteville in Italy, and in Sicily, where the Saracens had been at this time in full possession for nearly a century, defying all attempts to eject them, are recorded in Chapters 100 and 104. They were engaged in carving out a dominion for themselves, with Greeks or Lombard nobles as allies, rivals or victims, according to circumstances, when their activities brought them into conflict with the third of Henry III's popes, Leo IX, the emperor having just conferred the duchy of Benevento on the Papacy. The Italians rallied to the papal standard for the crushing of the predatory aliens, who in 953 shattered their army at Civitate.

### The Normans and the Reforming Papacy

**B**UT the Norman had a genius for colouring successful rapacity with piety. He desired not the hostility but the blessing of the Church; and instead of pressing his victory by force of arms, he sought and obtained a reconciliation by which both the Normans and the Papacy profited mightily. The Normans became the champions of the pope against all comers, and they could reckon in return upon the papal countenance for their own ambitious projects, though at first there was no formal pact.

Leo died next year (954), but the alliance between the Normans and the reforming Papacy remained the central fact of Italian politics. And it was a fact which did not fit in with the claims of a supreme central authority having its seat in Germany; though this was not apparent while the popes were men selected by an emperor who was in entire sympathy with their reforming activities. The

alliance may be said to have been sealed in 959, three years after the death of Henry III, when Pope Nicholas II conferred the duchy of Apulia and (by anticipation) of Sicily on Robert Guiscard as the pope's liegeman. The death of Henry prepared the way for a development of papal claims which would have been incredible while he was living.

Leo, when Henry drew him from his bishopric of Toul to make him pope, had accepted the high office on condition that he was elected canonically, not only on the emperor's authority. He indeed magnified his office, and crowded an

enormous and pervading activity into the six years of his reign, but without collision between his aims and Henry's. The imperial authority was in practical abeyance when Gerard of Florence became Nicholas II in 1058, in defiance of an attempt on the part of the Crescenti to recover control of the election. Nicholas reigned for only three years, but in that time he held the Lateran Council which permanently placed papal elections in the hands of the College of Cardinals, claimed the power of appointing the duke of Apulia and Sicily, and vigorously extended the Cluniac discipline which the old school of ecclesiastics detested.

His successor, Alexander II, was a Cluniac who was elected, without any reference at all to the imperial authority, in 1061, so that the German bishops claimed to set up an antipope, Honorius, though he could obtain little recognition outside Germany. And behind Alexander was Archdeacon Hildebrand, the inspiring genius of the theocratic movement, to whom both he and Nicholas owed their election. Not till Hildebrand succeeded in 1073 was the significance of that movement apparent.

**T**HE final separation of Neustria from Austrasia, of the old Frankish dominion of France from the Empire which was to be in essence German, was accomplished when the West Franks elected king a western noble, Odo count of Paris, on the death of Charles the Fat. The only legitimate Carolingian left, Charles the Simple, was reinstated on Odo's death, but deposed by Odo's brother Robert and Rudolf of Burgundy in 923. Rudolf reigned till his death in 936, when Robert's son, Hugh the Great, who might have claimed the succession, chose instead to recall Louis IV



**DUNSTAN, SAINT AND STATESMAN**

After his appointment to the archbishopric of Canterbury in 961 Dunstan became the most powerful man in England. He is figured (bottom left) in this eleventh century manuscript in pallium and mitre, with two other ecclesiastics at the feet of an enthroned archbishop—S. Gregory or S. Benedict.

*British Museum; Cotton MSS. Claudius A iii*

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(d'Outremer, 'from over the sea' in England), the son of Charles, and set him on the throne, while himself retaining the real power as duke of France.

For fifty years Louis (936-954) and his son Lothair (954-986) made restive attempts to free themselves from the domination of Hugh the Great (who died in 956) and his son Hugh Capet, but found their astute and mighty vassals too strong. Lothair was succeeded by his son Louis V, who died next year. No man of the great house remained; a

new king from a new house must be elected; Hugh was conspicuously the first among the nobles, and as a matter of course was elected—the first king of the Capet dynasty which reigned without a break in the male line until the fall of the monarchy in the Revolution; though his grandfather had reigned for a few months and his great-uncle for a few years.

Hugh at last became king because no other king was possible; he was in no sense a usurper; but his crown had no traditional halo. The new French monarchy was weak, not because the princes were weak men but because they were not so exceptionally strong that they could overcome the inherent weakness of their position among feudatories who could on occasion command greater resources than their own. For the power which raised the house of Capet to the throne was derived from that development of feudalism which most restricted its power when it was on the throne.

### England and the Danish Conquest

**I**N the British Isles the development of feudalism was much less marked than in France, Germany or Italy. The stress of the struggle with the Danes in England enabled Alfred to create a strong central government, and his son and grandsons to make it effective from the Channel to the Tyne. There were no mighty terri-



BRONZE SEAL OF AELFRIC THE TRAITOR

This seal is identified as being that of Aelfric, the corrupt Mercian ealdorman who on two occasions whilst commander of the forces of Ethelred—in 992 at London and again in 1003—by his treachery saved the Danish host from annihilation. Ethelred's reliance upon unreliable ministers largely caused the final triumph of the Danes.

*British Museum*

torial nobles to challenge the authority of kings who were the incarnation of the national idea, whose military prowess was convincing and whose care for just administration was scarcely less marked. Edward the Elder, Athelstan and his brothers, were fighting men because the need for fighting had not passed; but they did not neglect organization. Thus England was at the height of prosperity in the reign of Edgar the Peaceful (959-975), when the administration was in the hands of the great prelate Dunstan, who was also a zealous ecclesiastical reformer of the Cluniac school.

But with Ethelred the Redeless (or Unready) came disaster born of criminal folly and incompetence. The north lands were still sending forth adventurers. England had been an unprofitable objective for them for a hundred years past, when Olaf Trygvessen and Sweyn Fork-beard, the prince of Denmark, who was at odds with his father Harold Blue-tooth, began once more to harry the English coast. Having extorted from Ethelred a heavy ransom, they naturally returned; presently Ethelred excited them to the highest pitch of wrath by a massacre of the Danes then in England; and Sweyn, having succeeded to the Danish throne, set about the conquest of England. There was no heart in the resistance. Ethelred fled to Normandy; England was annexed to the



# EPISODES IN THE NORMAN CONQUEST AS DEPICTED IN THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

Executed to the order of William the Conqueror's half-brother, Odo, bishop of Bayeux, for his cathedral, the so-called Bayeux Tapestry is contemporary with the Norman Conquest of England and the primary authority on the Norman case. It comprises seventy-two scenes and supplies some unique evidence concerning the events illustrated. Here from left to right are (above) Edward enthroned, Harold taking an oath upon a reliquary to support the claims of William to the English throne, and the death of Edward; and (below) Harold crowned with Archbishop Stigand beside him, and the death of Harold, pierced through the eye by an arrow, at the battle of Hastings.



## The Nations in Being

Danish crown (1013); next year Sweyn died, and Canute, his son, became king of Denmark, England and (later) more or less of Norway.

For a time it seemed that a great Scandinavian empire might be formed; but the elements of it were too disconnected, and it went to pieces when Canute died, wrecked by the ineradicable tradition of division among the sons. In 1042 England recalled Ethelred's pious son, Edward (the Confessor), from Normandy, which his soul loved. He returned with a train of Norman favourites, mostly ecclesiastics, and left the administration in the hands of the great earls who were Canute's disastrous legacy to England.

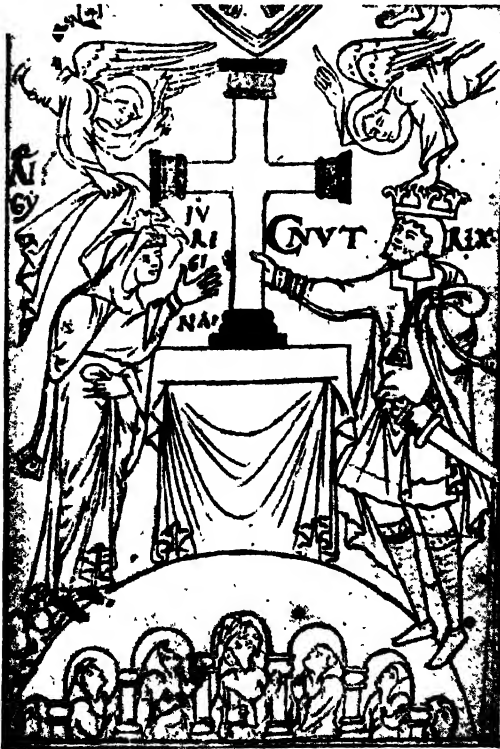
For Canute, himself a strong and very able ruler, had adopted the system which under such a ruler served admirably, of appointing district rulers responsible to himself, with the Anglo-Danish title of



**GREAT SEAL OF THE CONFESSOR**

Edward, son of Ethelred by Emma, and half-brother of Harthacnut (Hardicanute), her son by Canute, was chosen King of England in 1042. At heart a Norman and a monk he largely prepared the way for the Norman conquest.

*British Museum*



**ENGLAND'S DANISH KING CANUTE**

Notwithstanding his fierce Viking nature, Canute was an earnest Christian. He is pictured in this page from the Register of New Minster or Hyde Abbey with his wife 'Aelgifu'—Ethelred's widow Emma—placing a cross upon the altar.

*British Museum, Stowe MSS.*

earl, corresponding to the counts and margraves of Charlemagne and Otto. But when an incompetent or feeble successor took the great king's place, the earls stood to the crown as the great feudatories stood to the crown on the Continent, and as jealous rivals for power with each other. Under Edward the effective power in the state passed to the great Earl Godwin, and then to his son Harold. When Edward died in the first week of 1066, the only 'ætheling' (prince of the royal house) was a child, and the times imperatively demanded a man on the throne. The Witan, the national council, reverted to the constitutional custom of election and Harold son of Godwin was crowned king.

**B**UT William duke of Normandy chose to consider that promises made to him by Edward and by Harold entitled him to the succession, to which he obviously had no other claim. On the other hand, Harold Hardrada of Norway saw a prize to be snatched. Both the Norseman and the Norman invaded England. The Norseman landed first; Harold Godwinson met him and slew him at Stamford Bridge, and flew south to meet the Norman and to perish in the desperately fought battle





## INTRIGUE OF AN EASTERN EMPRESS

After the death of Romanus II his widow Theophano married Nicephorus Phocas, but tiring of him conspired with her Armenian lover, John Zimisce, to effect his assassination. This miniature in the manuscript History of Skylitzes at Madrid shows Zimisce about to clamber from a boat upon the Bosphorus to the balcony where his mistress awaits him.

*Photo, G. Millet, Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne*

of Hastings. The other earls had failed him in the hour of England's need.

William marched on London. The Witan, or what passed for the Witan, recognized the accomplished fact and elected the Conqueror king of England. On Christmas day 1066 he was crowned. The lands of the 'rebels' who had taken the field against him were distributed among the motley host which had joined his standard to overthrow the perjured king—who had been crowned by an uncanonical archbishop owing allegiance to the antipope Honorius, whereas William's banners had been explicitly blessed by Alexander.

England did not submit altogether tamely to its new master. During the next five years there were sundry revolts; but the patriots had no common policy; all the risings were crushed with an iron hand, and each provided new excuses for further distribution of forfeited estates. After 1071 the only rebels were Norman barons. The Norman conquest was completed. The meaning of the conquest to England may be studied in Chapters 100 and 105.

A few years before the Norman invasion, Malcolm Canmore in Scotland had overthrown the usurper (or legitimate monarch) Macbeth, and established the royal line of Scotland.

We need not trace in detail the story of the middle-European states that were growing into comparatively definite shape on the east of the German kingdom during the period covered by this chronicle. The northern Slavs, in less immediate contact with the Germans, were beginning to consolidate into the kingdom of Poland; its real founder was Boleslav (992-1025), whose power was a serious threat to Bohemia, but was followed by a relapse. The Czechs of Moravia and Bohemia under the Premyslid dynasty were in constant contact with the German kings; they had long been Christianised, and though

not actually absorbed into the Western Empire they were for the most part tributary, and their ecclesiastical system was a branch of the German.

The Magyars in Hungary, after their westward rush was stayed by Otto I, made great progress, politically and culturally, under Stephen I (997-1038), whose vigour and ability were tempered by a piety which caused him to be canonised fifty years after his death. Magyars and Poles as well as Czechs attached themselves to the Western, not the Eastern, church.

On the east of these three nationalities, two of which were Slavonic, Swedish captains, the 'Ros,' set up the Slavonic dominion which took their name and became known as Russia; a dominion extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, with its centres at Kiev and Novgorod. The original hero of the Russians was the more or less mythical Rurik. The second of their heroes, Sviatoslav or Svétoslav, we shall meet in the account of the Eastern Empire, to which we now turn.

**T**HE Greek Empire, as we saw, continued on its placid and inglorious way through the lives of the son and grandson of Basil the Macedonian. It was not seriously menaced by any foreign foe, nor with internal disruption by hereditary

## The Nations in Being

military magnates in command of independent forces; the imperial authority, however feebly exercised, was not challenged; the army was the army of the state, and the administration was in the hands of a trained professional bureaucracy which worked mechanically but adequately. For a great part of Constantine's long reign the imperial title was shared and the imperial office discharged by a soldier of some distinction, Romanus I, whose name was given to Constantine's own son, who succeeded him in 959.

The reign of Romanus II was active but brief, inaugurating a period of military energy. The khalif at Bagdad was now the puppet of the Persian Buid family; another family, the Hamdanids, had set up virtually independent emirates on the Greek borders at Aleppo and Mosul; a descendant of Ali, having proclaimed himself khalif at Khairwan, had absorbed the Aglabid kingdom and annexed Egypt, with part of Syria, where the Fatimid khâlifate was now established. In the west there was a third khalif, since the Ommiad Abd er-Rahman III had so proclaimed himself in 928. Khorassan was rapidly falling under the sway of Turkish tribal chiefs, while the best of the Bagdad soldiery and captains were drawn from the same source. The

Bouids themselves, like most Persians, were Shiah, though they preferred calling themselves the ministers of a Sunni khalif to acknowledging the Fatimid in Egypt. So that the time was favourable for an attack on the Saracens.

The emperor's general, Nicephorus Phocas, opened the attack in 960. Crete was recaptured, Cilicia was invaded. Romanus died in 963, leaving two infants, Basil II and Constantine VIII, to share the imperial crown, with their young mother Theophano as regent. The victorious general returned, married the widow, and associated himself on the throne with the infants, after the precedent of Romanus I. He recovered Cyprus, and his armies overran half Syria. But he was extremely unpopular with the clergy and at court; Theophano repented her marriage; she entered on a conspiracy with one of Nicephorus' captains, John Zimisces; John murdered the rather terrible emperor while he slept, and proclaimed himself—without opposition—the associate of the two children. Instead of marrying their mother, he shut her up in a convent (969).

Then, like Basil the Macedonian, he atoned for his crime. He treated the boys, his colleagues, with all the respect due to their position. One of their sisters he



**THEOPHANO SENT INTO EXILE BY HER PARAMOUR JOHN ZIMISCES**

Nicephorus Phocas was not popular as emperor and his assassination by John Zimisces was generally condoned. But Zimisces secured his own coronation only by repudiating Theophano, who had instigated the crime—a step he was not unwilling to take in view of her infidelity and treachery—and despite her frantic denunciation of his ingratitude he dismissed her with ignominy from the palace to the seclusion of a convent. The incident is thus illustrated in the History of John Skylitzes.

*Photo, G. Millet, Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne (Schlumberger-Hachette)*

married himself; the other became the bride of Otto II; with his own wealth he was lavish in pious charity. The Russian Sviatoslav was overrunning Bulgaria; in 971 John marched against him, defeated him in two desperate battles, and then struck a treaty, which converted the Russian power into an ally and the Russian people into Christians of the Orthodox Church. Then he went campaigning in Syria where the Saracens had been recovering ground. But his career of victory was cut short by his sudden death in 976.

Basil II, now twenty years old, admitted no new colleague to share the imperial power and dignity with his brother Constantine and himself. For nearly fifty years—till 1025—he reigned virtually alone. A new trouble had arisen in the increasing independence of territorial magnates in Asia Minor. Possibly it would have been better for the Empire had he sought to convert them into barons of the marches; but the more obvious course, which he adopted with ultimate success, was to suppress them.

But while he was thus engaged, Bulgaria, profiting by the expulsion of the Russians, was again becoming powerful and troublesome under her king Samuel. Dominating the Serbs in the north-west, Samuel's raiders poured year by year over Macedonia. The first campaigns against them were ineffective. In 996 they harried

the Peloponnese but suffered a disastrous defeat while retiring. In 1002 Basil set about the work of conquest in earnest; but it was not completed until in 1014 he won an overwhelming victory, taking 15,000 captives. He blinded those captives, all but a hundred and fifty, who were left an eye apiece to guide the rest home. The horror of the thing killed Samuel, while Basil won the grim honour of his distinctive name *Bulgaroctonus*, Basil the Bulgar-slayer. The Bulgars still held out till the last resistance was crushed in 1018. So ended the first Bulgar kingdom.

Basil, now an old man, next turned his arms against Armenia—a mistake, since thereby he destroyed an effective buffer between the Empire and the Mahomedan powers. With his death in 1025 passed the revived strength and energy of the Eastern Empire. Constantine was the last prince of the Macedonian house. He followed his brother to the grave in 1028. For the next twenty-six years the emperors were the successive husbands of his daughter Zoe; during this period the last of the Greeks were being ejected from south Italy by the Norman Hautevilles, and the Eastern Empire was in effect without a ruler. For three brief years Zoe's sister, Theodora (1054-1057), did what she could to check the process of decay. In vain; for she died at the moment when the Mahomedan world was falling to the Seljuk Turks.



**SVIATOSLAV'S RUSSIAN TROOPS ROUTED BY BYZANTINE CAVALRY**

Russians made their first appearance in Bulgaria in 967, when Nicephorus Phocas, then engaged in conflict with the Bulgarians, enlisted their assistance. Under John Zimisces Byzantine policy changed, and in 971 that emperor co-operated with Boris II in expelling the Russians who were overrunning Bulgaria under their prince Sviatoslav. Zimisces defeated them in two pitched battles, and thereafter concluded a treaty whereby the Russian became the ally of the Byzantine power.

*From the MS. History of John Skylitzes; photo, G. Milkt, Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne*

## The Nations in Being

**WE** saw in previous Chronicles that the Ommiads stood for the old Arabian party of the aristocracy of Islam and Arab supremacy within Islam. The Abbasids turned out the Ommiads, as the representatives of the party of equality among the peoples who joined the Faith, in association with the Shiahs, the mystics of Islam; who as mystics were especially strong among the Persians, and as Fatimids had adherents in all parts. But from the middle of the ninth century the Abbasids had preferred the Old Believers to the Persians, and were at the same time growing increasingly dependent on the mercenary troops, drawn mainly from the Turkish tribes beyond the Oxus, the most materialistic of races; to whom the Koran as literally interpreted appealed strongly, in contrast with mystic interpretations.

Further, the later Abbasids were without the personal ability of the first rulers. Hence the break-up in the tenth century, and the curious spectacle of a Sunni khalif at Bagdad, in the hands of the Shiah Bouids, yet surrounded by a Sunni Turkish soldiery with whom the Bouids did not dare to quarrel; while his spiritual authority as khalif scarcely extended beyond Syria, and his temporal power was limited to a small area of which Bagdad was the centre. Already Turkish commanders had for short periods turned governorships in Egypt and Syria into independent lordships; an actual Turkish domination had not been set up, for the simple reason that the adventurers had not a nation, a tribe, or even a company of sworn followers at their backs.

Even on their own ground, in the Trans-Oxus, the Turks were not a nation, though their tribes were beginning to work in



**BASIL II 'SLAYER OF BULGARIANS'**

Basil II (c. 958-1025), known as Bulgaroctonus from the atrocities that attended his extinction of the Bulgarian kingdom, was a ruthless man but a capable ruler, under whom the Eastern Empire rose to great power. This miniature from a contemporary psalter depicts him in imperial costume with obsequious officials on their knees before him.

*S. Mark's, Venice; from Schlumberger, 'L'épopée byzantine'*

concert, sometimes against the Chinese and sometimes within the Mahomedan dominion, of which they could not be called subjects, though they formed a part of it in so far as they had adopted Islam. During this same period the Khitai Tatars were penetrating North China.

Towards the close of the tenth century, however, an actual Turkish dominion was in course of establishing itself, as champion of Mahomedanism in its most fanatical form, in the farthest lands of what had once been the empire of Alexander the Great. Its centre was at Ghazni, in the modern Afghanistan; its founder was the Turk governor Sabuktigin, nominally an officer of the khalif; its great figure was his son Mahmud of Ghazni (998-1300).

mighty in war, destroyer of idols, and hardly less famous as a patron of learning (see Chap. 108). Sabuktagin, as lord of Ghazni, made himself an independent prince in fact if not in name; Mahmud was a conqueror who once more broke through the mountain barrier of India and prepared the way for the coming Mahomedan supremacy, though he did not himself organize his own conquests. Ten several times or more he led his fiercely fanatical troops through the mountain passes, into the Land of the Five Rivers—the Punjab—which Alexander had conquered, and on to the Ganges basin or down the Indus to Gujarat, whence he bore away the famous gates of Somnath, the great Hindu shrine; laying waste the temples, overthrowing the images of the gods and carrying off vast spoils. Famous poets and men of learning gathered at the court of Ghazni. Half Persia owned his sway, while he held off the swarms of the Turkish tribes, as Rollo or the Danes of the Danelaw, held off their Viking kinsfolk.

Yet Mahmud did not create an empire. Soon after his death the Seljuk Turks broke in; the Ghaznavid dynasty did not disappear, but it was reduced by the invaders to a petty principality. It was the Seljuks (see Chap. 108) who became

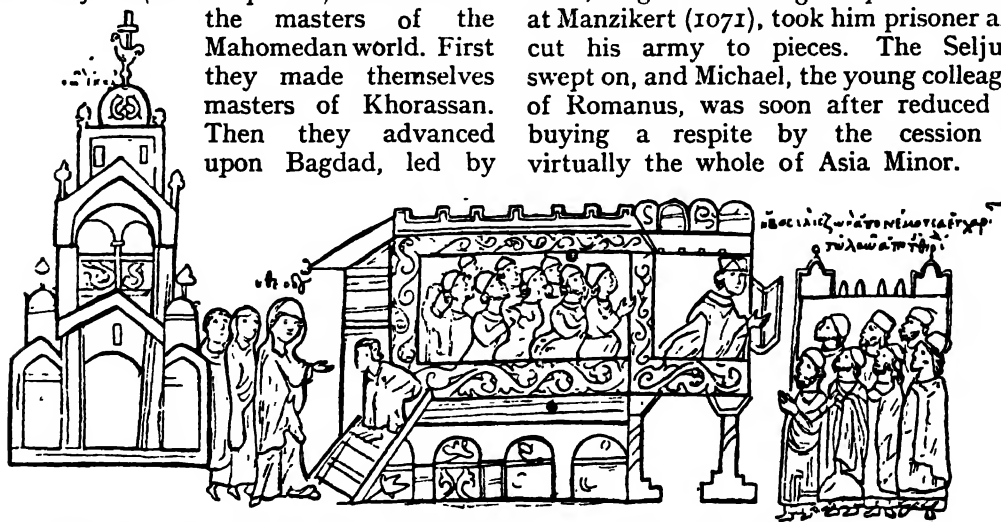
the masters of the Mahomedan world. First they made themselves masters of Khorassan. Then they advanced upon Bagdad, led by

their chief Tughril, not as rebels but to deliver the khalif from the hands of the heretical Persians. But the hands of the orthodox Turks were not more tender. The khalif was the spiritual head, whose authority it was Tughril's mission to restore, but the wielder of the sword retained the temporal power. The Boujids passed, but Tughril was the Great Sultan (1055).

## Asia Minor lost to the Seljuk Turks

**I**N 1057, Theodora died, the last of the Macedonian family. She had nominated a successor whose incompetence at once became obvious. He was deposed in favour of the soldier Isaac Comnenus, but Isaac, afflicted with a sore disease, retired to a monastery. He was succeeded by Constantine X Ducas, an experienced politician who was neither a soldier nor a statesman (1059).

In 1060 Alp Arslan, Tughril's successor, flung himself on Armenia. The Empire gave no effective aid to the country whose power Basil II had destroyed. The Seljuks overran Armenia, and then flooded into Asia Minor. At last a new emperor, Romanus IV Diogenes, took up the neglected task and attacked the invader. Alp Arslan inveigled him into the mountains, fought him in a great pitched battle at Manzikert (1071), took him prisoner and cut his army to pieces. The Seljuks swept on, and Michael, the young colleague of Romanus, was soon after reduced to buying a respite by the cession of virtually the whole of Asia Minor.



## EMPERESS ZOE TENDERING THANKS TO THE PEOPLE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

As successive husbands of Zoe, daughter of Constantine II, Romanus Argyrus and the Paphlagonian Michael IV wielded the sceptre between 1028 and 1041. Zoe then adopted Michael Calaphates, who repaid her with imprisonment. She was released at the clamour of the populace, who cherished loyalty to her family. This illustration in the History of Skylitzes shows her leaving S. Sophia and entering the palace to thank the people. Zoe's last husband was Constantine Monomachus.

*From Schlumberger, 'L'Épopée byzantine,' Hachette*

# THE VIKINGS AND THEIR VOYAGES

How the Sturdy Sailors of the Baltic made their  
Name feared from Constantinople to America

By A. MACCALLUM SCOTT

Author of *Suomi the Land of the Finns*, *Beyond the Baltic*, etc.

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THE Nordic races, whose homeland and breeding ground were the shores of the Baltic Sea, have been a factor in European history from the earliest recorded times. The Baltic may be regarded as a kind of northern Mediterranean, round whose shores, during the dark millenniums before the dawn of history, developed a special racial type, with mental and moral characteristics of its own and with a distinctive culture, or primitive civilization, which has been called Scandinavian.

Physically, these men of the North were long-headed, fair-haired, blue-eyed giants, of great strength, and capable of long-sustained outbursts of energy, intellectual as well as physical. They had great powers of concentration and of thinking ahead. Their moral characteristics were equally remarkable. Passionately attached to their individual liberty, they resented any authority not emanating in some degree from themselves. They were adventurous by temperament, and had an extraordinary gift for adapting themselves to changed circumstances.

All southern Europe, from the Black Sea to the western shores of Ireland, was Christian by the eighth century; but the North, the countries round the Baltic, hidden beyond leagues of trackless forest infested by savage tribes, was as unknown as the yet undiscovered America. The spoilers of Rome were known, but their breeding ground might have been outside the world. They swooped down like invaders from another planet.

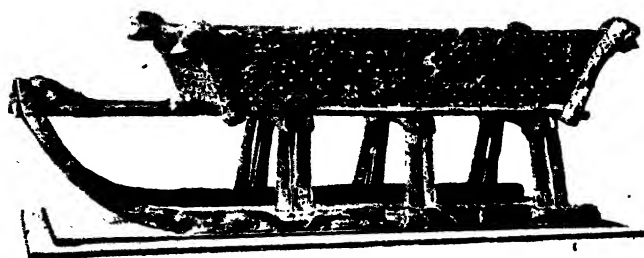
Not till the Viking Age did the North itself emerge into the light of history and 'civilized' Europe begin to learn something of the homeland of this unending series of invaders. The 'Viking Age' is a

label used to indicate that period of from two to three centuries, roughly, from A.D. 750 to 1000, during which the Scandinavian races—Danes, Norwegians and Swedes—no longer content with laboriously trekking overland as their predecessors had done in all their previous invasions, took to the sea, and added a new terror to their name. Hitherto their progress had been a thing of which the rumour spread afar. The horde was preceded by affrighted fugitives and messengers appealing for succour. The approach of the invaders could be measured. There was time to make arrangements for defence, to conceal treasure, to take to flight, to make terms, to buy off with ransom. But when they came by sea no heralds of terror preceded them. They swooped down suddenly, like an eagle, seized their prey, and departed again into the unknown. They were doubly mysterious, and doubly terrible.

But there was another characteristic of these maritime raids which reacted on the raiders themselves.

Hitherto the invading hosts had been nations or tribes on the march.

They came not merely to plunder but to occupy and to settle. They had no thoughts of undertaking another laborious trek, laden with loot, through hostile tribes, back to the bleak north from which they came. They remained in the Promised Land which they had won, enjoying its plenty, mingling with the natives, acquiring rapidly their culture and civilization, grafting, as it were, a more vigorous shoot on to the older stock. In a generation or two they had become a new nation. They carried back no sparks from the torch of civilization



CARVED SLEDGE OF THE VIKING AGE

Viking sledges, as exemplified in the Oseberg ship grave, consisted of a flat box carried on thin poles attached to the runners by three pairs of double supports. This Oseberg sledge is entirely covered with carving, showing a geometrical pattern on the panels and animals' heads on the corner posts.

into the dark North. Their long advance upon the South had been spread over several generations, during which the tie with the homeland had been broken. Only a vague tradition of their origin survived in the new, mixed race.

But the raiders who came by sea were more mobile. For the first hundred years, at any rate, they seldom came in sufficient numbers to occupy territory. It was a case of loading their boats and sailing off again. They returned to their homes in the North, stored their plunder and set forth again for more. As the system developed, as the raids became more numerous and were organized on a larger scale, as permanent footholds began to be established on the plundered coasts, more than bullion and weapons, and costly

fabrics, and delicious wines, and slaves, were carried into the North. Stowed away among the plunder was an unseen freight, the seeds of the civilization and culture of the South, ideas and thoughts which were to lead to a spiritual awakening of the race, not merely in the territory which it had occupied in the South, but in its own homeland. Prisoners carried north as slaves would often be missionaries of new know-

ledge. Even Christianity began to penetrate these pagan fastnesses, and at last the Christian Church discovered that the best protection for civilization was to christianise the hive from which the spoilers of the abbeys issued.

This taking to the sea had another effect upon the northern peoples. It brought them all together in closer alliance or association than they had ever been before. There was already a common type of Baltic civilization, more primitive than, and very different from, the Mediterranean civilization. They had their own religion, their own traditional poetry, their mystic runes for carving inscriptions and their distinctive decorative art in which the figures of animals and plants were twisted into complicated geometrical designs. It had been an unconscious growth, and, though the various peoples spoke similar languages, and had the same mode of life, they knew little of each other. The

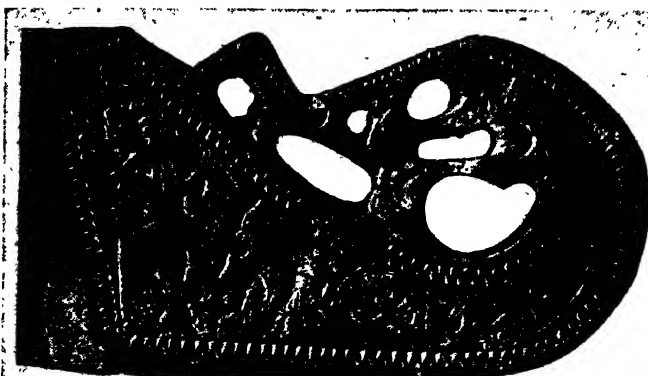


WAGON FOR A DEAD QUEEN'S PROGRESSES THROUGH THE SPIRIT WORLD

Ship burial was a distinctive Scandinavian custom. Sometimes the ship containing the corpse was launched and set afire, sometimes buried beneath a 'how,' or tumulus, with prow pointing to the sea. Of the latter kind was the Scandinavian queen's funeral ship found at Oseberg. Among its contents for her use in the after-life was this wagon. Remains of fifteen horses and four dogs were also found in the ship, together with a complete outfit of harness for the wagon and the sledges.

*Courtesy of Oslo University*





Wooden bedsteads have been found in several ship graves. In the specimen from Oseberg the head-posts—one of which is here shown horizontally—are carved in a design explained as representing animals' heads with reverted necks.



This fantastic head on a long, outstretched neck—one of the four corner-posts of a chest—is very characteristic of Viking art.



Norse craftsmen brought decorative art to a high perfection, using foreign models freely, yet developing a style of their own. On the right the intricate design of a door-lintel of the funeral cabin of the Oseberg ship is shown in detail and, beside it, carvings on the portal of Hyllestad church, where scenes from Scandinavian mythology as contained in the Icelandic Eddas—here Sigurd slaying Fafnir, the dragon guardian of Ardvare's treasure—are ingeniously introduced into the floral design.

#### VIKING ART AND CULTURE AS REVEALED BY A BURIAL SHIP

*Courtesy of Oslo University and (bottom left and centre) photos, P. Vaering*



**THE OSEBERG SHIP AS FOUND**

Oseberg in Norway yielded a rich treasure of Viking culture in 1903, when the burial ship of a ninth-century queen was located under a how, or barrow, on the west side of the Christiania fjord. It is shown here in situ as first unearthed; in the opposite page as reconstructed in the Oslo Museum.

*Courtesy of Oslo University*

new facilities for intercourse by sea, the co-operation in raiding expeditions brought them closer together, made them more conscious of their numbers and their power, and created, for the first time, a kind of rude commonwealth throughout the north of Europe.

The Viking Age was the period when Roman Europe discovered the North, and when the North found itself. That is why it has such importance for European history, far greater than the classical historians have usually given it.

The ship, then, was the key to this new phase of European history, the sea-going ship. Hitherto the ships of the Mediterranean had been mere cockle shells and glorified row-boats. The earliest sailors of whom we have knowledge navigated the Nile, and the island-strewn Aegean, and when they ventured beyond these familiar waters they hugged the coast, avoiding the dangers of the open sea. Wonderful voyages, indeed, were made in these frail coasting craft. The Argonauts explored the shores of the Black Sea; Ulysses brought back wonder tales of the coast of Africa. The Phoenicians groped their way out into the Atlantic, and circum-

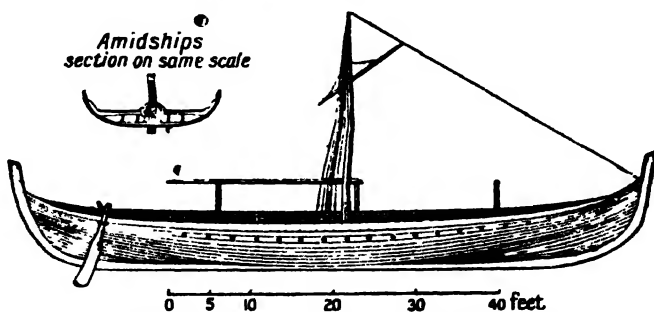
navigated Africa, and followed the west coast of Europe up into the North Sea, and possibly even into the Baltic.

In the Baltic and the North Sea a more seaworthy boat and an even more adventurous type of seaman were evolved. The Scandinavian race had perforce to be seamen. The deficiencies of northern agriculture were made good by the harvest of the sea. As fishermen the Norsemen won their bread on stormy waters. They followed the fish shoals far beyond the sheltered fjords. They were accustomed to the tides and fierce currents and tempests of the North Sea.

Even their rivers were swift in current, and full of dangerous rapids. Inured to such perils from birth, they gradually developed a type of ship, a method of navigation and a temper of mind which enabled them to face the open sea.

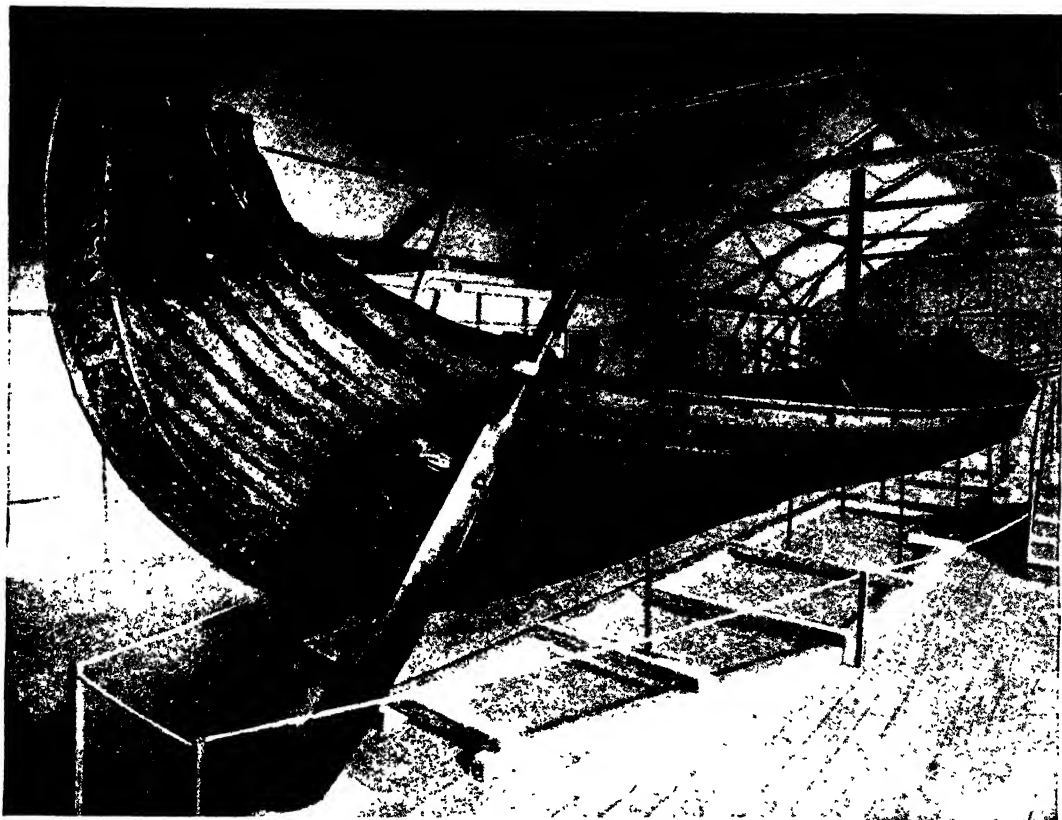
Before the beginning of the Christian era Caesar, in his Commentaries, had noted the superior seaworthiness of the ships of the sea-taring tribes on the shores of the English Channel. At Bohuslan, in Sweden, there are rock carvings of ships much older than that (page 635), and from their design some have surmised that the Scandinavians got their first hints in shipbuilding from the Phoenicians.

The Viking movement, seen in its proper perspective, is not an isolated



**WARSHIP OF A VIKING CHIEFTAIN**

Largely owing to its having been interred in air-proof blue clay, the burial ship found at Gogstad in 1880 provides a practical model of Viking ship construction. It was clinker-built, caulked with hair and iron-fastened, and shallow-bottomed for navigation in shallow water and for easy beaching.



While conforming to the true Scandinavian type, the Oseberg ship was so much more elaborately ornamented than its Gogstad counterpart that it is supposed to have been a state barge for the queen, rather than a sea-going ship for Viking raids. It is oak-built, about 72 feet long and about 10 feet wide. The light open-work frame here shows the position of the burial cabin amidships.



The Gogstad ship measured 78 feet in length over all, 15½ feet in width, and 6 feet in depth. Speed was the chief aim of the Viking boat-builder, and it is achieved here by the lightness of the craft, the sharp lines of stem and stern, and the bellying sides. It was seated for 32 oars, on 16 benches, and carried a large, square sail on its single mast, abaft which the funeral chamber was constructed. The warriors' shields were ranged round the gunwale as a protection.

#### **ACTUAL VIKING SHIPS OF THE MIDDLE NINTH CENTURY**

*Courtesy of Oslo University*

phenomenon, but part of a long continued process of permeation of Europe by the northern races. At the beginning of the eighth century the North was ripening for another outburst of energy. The population of Scandinavia was already too numerous for the niggard provision of nature and the adventurous temper of the people. One must not conceive of a great

locust-horde of adventurers issuing out of the northern hive and swarming over the southern

lands. It was a case of small parties, the younger sons for whom there were no fields to till or forests to hunt at home, who must go out into the world to push their fortunes. The means were at hand in the long-boat, like the highwayman's horse. When roast beef grew scarce in the hall of old Wat Scott of Harden his good lady would serve up to her husband at the dinner-table a pair of spurs. Next day he was off cattle raiding on the English side of the border. So might the spartan mother of the young Viking point him the way to the boat-shed in the spring.

In the year A.D. 787 three Viking ships raided the south coast of England near Dorchester, and carried off spoil. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle this was the first of the Viking raids. So unprecedented was the occurrence that the sheriff innocently went down to the port to see who the strangers were, and was slain by them. In after years there was no need to make inquiry. At the first sight of the square sails at sea the people fled inland. Soon all the coasts of western Europe were to know the terror of the long-ships, with their dragon heads and their bulwark of round shields.

The men who manned them were fierce pagans bursting in on peaceful Christian lands. They came to plunder, ravish, slay, and then to disappear, carrying off treasure and slaves. No one knew when they might arrive. Their sudden, fierce onslaught was irresistible. Their numbers seemed inexhaustible. They sailed boldly up the great rivers into the very heart of the land. It seemed the greatest disaster that had happened to Christendom since the irruption of Mahomedanism.

But even before this date the Vikings had been known, as traders apparently, along the shores of France, and in the Mediterranean. These were the pioneers who spied out the richness of the land, and brought back to the north the report of a southern Eldorado. The mighty Charlemagne, himself the descendant of northern invaders, and the inheritor and augments of their conquests, foresaw, before his death in 814, that the flood-gates were opening for a new deluge. A chronicler has preserved a legend of the effect which the sight of the first Viking ships in the Mediterranean produced upon him.

Charlemagne, dining after a journey, was at a town upon the shore of the Gulf of the Lion, near Narbonne, when suddenly a number of strange sails were seen hovering about the coast. There was much speculation among the company as to whether the strangers might be Jewish, African or British traders. 'No bales of merchandise,' said the Emperor, 'are borne hither by yonder ships. They are manned by terrible enemies.' For a time he stood at the window gazing mournfully at the harbingers of storm. 'Not for myself do I weep,' he continued, 'nor for anything yon ships can do to me. But truly I grieve to think that in my lifetime they have dared to approach these shores, and greater still is my grief to think of the evils they will bring on my successors.'

**Charlemagne's  
sad forebodings**

In his lifetime Charlemagne did something to stem the tide. On land he drove Godred, the Danish king, back behind his own frontier. He subjugated the Frisians, a trading and maritime race on the coast, next Denmark. On sea he maintained a fleet to protect the Frankish coast. But already the Northmen were steadily encroaching on other lands. The Swedish Vikings, having no rich lands to plunder on the Baltic shores, and, owing to their geographical position, feeling the attraction of the Eastern Empire rather than the Western, were engaged in a peaceful penetration of what is now Russia. They sailed up the great Russian rivers which fall into the Baltic, and established a lucrative trade with Eastern merchants who ascended the Black Sea rivers.

On the other hand, the Norwegian and Danish Vikings had their faces turned towards the West. They confined their settlements, in the first instance, to the north of Scotland and the Isles. They mingled with the Celtic population, and from the mixed race sprang a generation of even more formidable leaders. Then came the raids upon the monasteries and towns which dotted the coast of Scotland, England and Ireland. Before the end of the eighth century Lindisfarne had been sacked, and Jarrow, and Iona.

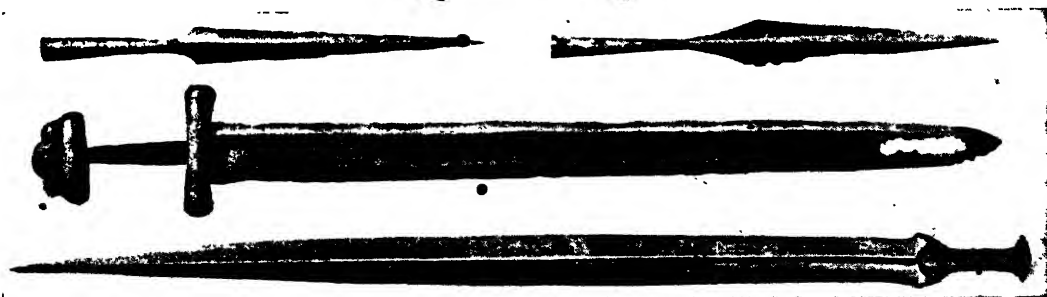
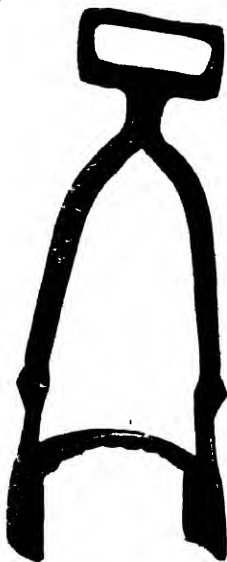
It was in the ninth century that the deluge broke through all dams. The story of the exploits of the earlier adventurers had been celebrated by the 'skalds' (bards) throughout all the homesteads of Scandinavia. The rise to power in Norway of Harold Harfagr (Harold Fair-hair), who asserted his authority over turbulent chieftains who had hitherto acknowledged no law but their own, drove forth the more recalcitrant spirits to seek new kingdoms. The emigration to Scotland, the Orkneys and Shetlands, the Hebrides and Ireland became something like a tribal movement; Iceland was discovered and settled. The mixed race became more numerous.

The contact with civilization only whetted the Vikings' appetite for bolder exploits. The coasts of Flanders and of

France were raided. The great rivers, the Rhine, the Somme, the Seine, the Loire and the Garonne, were highways by which the Viking boats penetrated right into the heart of the richest provinces of the Empire. The Northmen raided, besieged and sacked Paris, Amiens, Orléans, Poitiers, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Angoulême, Nantes and Tours. Arab historians tell how they swarmed along the coast of Spain, their ships spreading their sails, 'like dark red sea-birds,' raiding Lisbon, Cadiz, Seville and even Arzilla on the African coast. They entered the Mediterranean and penetrated as far as the shores of Italy. Simultaneously the Varangians, as the Swedish Vikings were called, were advancing by the eastern

river route, and had launched their ships upon the Black Sea; their 'barbaric yawp' had been heard from the walls of Constantinople. Thus the pagan Northmen had encircled Christian Europe.

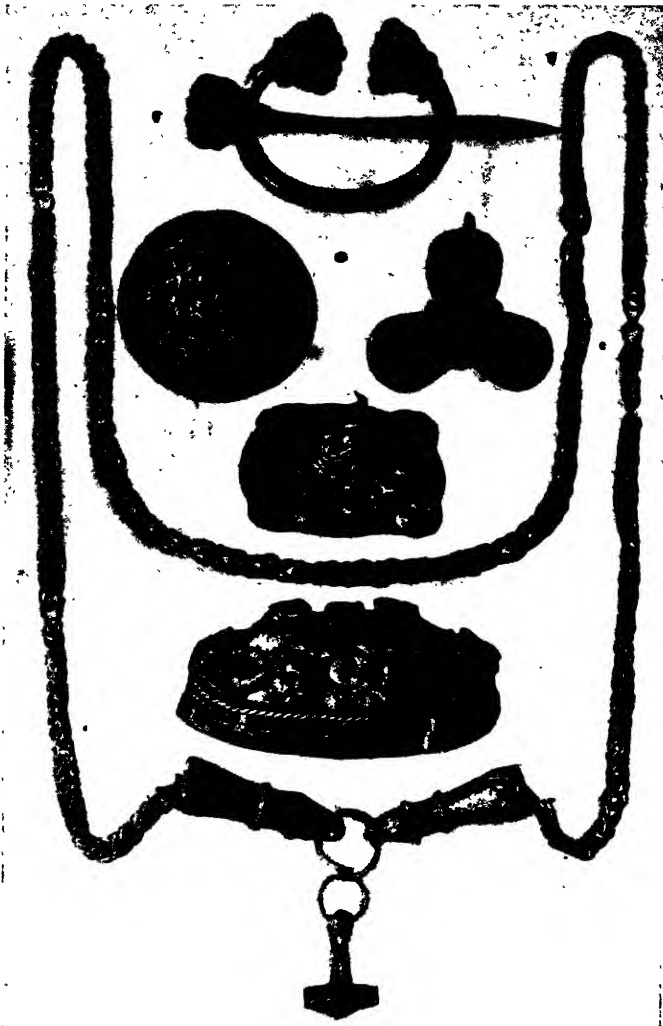
The names of the earlier leaders of the Viking movement emerge from a mist of legend. From among them looms up the gigantic figure of Ragnar Lodbrok, or Ragnar Hairy-breeches. The facts about his origin and his death are obscure, but there is no doubt as to the wide range of his activity and the terror inspired by his name. Born in Norway, he was closely



#### MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF THE SCANDINAVIAN SEA ROVERS

In the Viking age, from about 800 to the eleventh century, iron ore was extracted, smelted and worked in Scandinavia. Spears with iron heads (top of lower photograph) and heavy double-edged iron swords (bottom), with wooden handles often covered with silver, were the principal weapons used by the Vikings, and in addition very heavy iron battle axes. Stirrups (top) and other pieces of harness prove that they used horses in land warfare.

*British Museum (top); photos, P. Vaering (bottom)*



#### SCANDINAVIAN WOMEN'S JEWELRY

Brooches—round, oblong and trefoil-shape—were commonly of bronze, with decorative designs suggesting a Celtic influence, which also appears in the Scandinavian pin brooches (top) of this period. A common ornament was a silver Thor's hammer, shown here attached to a delicate gold necklet.

*From Sophus Muller, 'Vor Oldtid'*

connected with the ruling family in Denmark. From his boyhood he joined in Viking raids 'west over seas,' and was familiar with all the adventurers who every summer swarmed through the Orkneys and the Hebrides down to Ireland. He seems to have explored the northern coast of Europe as far as the White Sea. His skill and daring soon made him a recognized leader among the adventurers.

In A.D. 845 he led a Viking fleet up the Seine and attacked Paris. The expedition was an unfortunate one for the North-

men, for while they were retreating with their booty an outbreak of plague devastated their forces. But he had proved the ability of the 'dark red sea-birds' to strike far inland. Ragnar died as he had lived, a rover, a free-booter of the seas, a homeless man who had not yet succeeded in carving out a kingdom for himself. According to the account sung for generations by all the skalds of the north, he was taken prisoner while raiding in the north of England by Aelle, king of Northumberland, who flung him into a snake pit where he perished shouting to the last a savage death song.

The famous Death Song of Ragnar Lodbrok, with its refrain 'We hewed with the brand,' is a literary production some three centuries later in date, but the legend told by the skalds was concerned chiefly with the vengeance of the sons of Ragnar. As he lay among the snakes he exclaimed: 'The little pigs would grunt now if they knew how it fares with the old boar.' And so it was when the news of his death reached his four sons. Bjorn 'Ironside' gripped his spear shaft so hard that the print of his fingers remained stamped upon it. 'Hvitserk,' suspending a game of chess, clenched his fingers

so tightly upon a chess piece that the blood started from under his nails. Sigurd 'Snake-eye' was trimming his nails with a knife, and kept on paring until he cut into the bone. Ivar 'the Boneless' asked particularly for all details, but his face became red, blue and pale by turns, and his skin was swollen with anger. These pent-up emotions afterwards found expression in savage vengeance, and King Aelle was subjected to the frightful rite of the Blood Eagle.

By the middle of the ninth century

the Danish Vikings, no longer content with casual raids, following the example of the Norwegians in Ireland, had established permanent fortified camps at the mouths of the Scheldt, the Somme, the Seine, the Loire and the Garonne, from which bases they organized formidable expeditions into the interior, boldly challenging the military resources of the Empire. England was at the same time overrun, and King Alfred, in desperate straits, was hiding in the marshes of Athelney till he could reorganize the national defences, and lay the foundations of modern England. The Franks, organized merely to keep a peasant population in subjection, but not to resist an armed invasion, were at first a helpless prey. Wherever the great rivers afforded a highway there went the Vikings. When Paris resisted and stood siege, they sailed up the river and laid waste the country far beyond. It was only gradually that the Franks learned to build fortified bridges to bar the rivers and to fortify their cities.

The lure of Rome, the treasure house of the world, was ever before the Northmen. They knew that its walls were not inviolate, even to their weapons, for had not their kindred, the Goths, sacked the

Mistress of the World centuries before? In the year 850 Bjorn 'Ironside,' the son of Ragnar Lodbrok, together with his foster-father, Hasteinn, sailed round Spain, and through the Strait of Gibraltar, into the Mediterranean. There they began a systematic harrying of the coast of France. They fortified a camp on the island of Camargue in the Rhône delta, from which base they plundered the cities of the Riviera. They sailed up the Rhône, despite its swift current, as far as Valence. They even planned an attack on Rome itself, and this gave rise to a diverting incident which illustrates the child-like ignorance of these mighty warriors.

It was in the spring when they set sail from the mouth of the Rhône for the fabled land of Italy. They plundered Pisa. Then they came to a town near the mouth of a river, a town whose palaces seemed so magnificent to their unsophisticated northern eyes that they judged it must be Rome itself. So strong a fortress could not

be taken by direct assault. They therefore devised a stratagem. Hasteinn feigned sickness, and professed himself anxious for baptism. A truce was arranged so that the bishop might baptise him. Then his death was announced, and permission was given for his comrades to give him Christian burial within the city walls. Suddenly the mourners threw off their disguise and revealed themselves as a band of armed warriors. The city was captured, and the raiders sailed off with the spoil. They had been three years away from home. It was not till afterwards that they discovered that the city which they had looted was not Rome, but Luna, at the mouth of the Magra.

In eastern Europe a similar process was taking place. The Swedish Vikings, or Varangians, sailing up the Neva to Lake Ladoga, and thence up the Volkhof to Lake Ilmen, had built a fort, called Novgorod, and established there the central depot for their trade with the Greek and Armenian merchants from the Black Sea. In this mart the products of the north, slaves, dried fish, amber, furs, tar, honey and wax, were exchanged for the weapons, trinkets, metals, woven fabrics and wines of the south. Here, also, as in Scotland, Ireland and Normandy, a mixed population began to grow up, a blend of Swede, Finn and Slav, and from the blended race sprang leaders of genius.

As early as 839 Swedish (or Ros, as they were also called) traders were prospecting Constantinople. In the chronicles of the Western Empire for that year it is recorded that a Byzantine embassy to the court of Louis the Pious was accompanied by certain people called Rhos, who now asked leave to return by this route to their own country, which was Sweden. The route through Russia had apparently been temporarily closed by some disturbance among the tribes. These tribal risings became a serious menace to trade. In the year 862 one of the Varangian leaders, called Rurik, established his rule over the tribes round Novgorod, and thus laid the foundations of the Russian Empire.

Three years later two other Varangian leaders, Askold and Dir, set out for



Constantinople, just as in the west Bjorn and Hasteinn about the same time had set out for Rome. Halting at Kiev, they founded a kingdom there which, a few years later, was absorbed in that of Novgorod. Pushing on from Kiev with a fleet of Viking boats, they shot the rapids of the Dnieper, and then launched forth boldly on the Black Sea, as on their native element, the Baltic. The

**Great exploits of Varangian leaders** temptation of open water was too much for them, and, besides, they had

some old scores as to the control of the northern trade route to settle with the mercenary rulers of the Byzantine Empire. They took to raiding the coasts of Thrace and Asia Minor, as Bjorn and Hasteinn were doing on the shores of Provence and Italy. Two hundred small but swift and seaworthy Viking boats passed through the Bosphorus and made their way into the Sea of Marmora, where they began plundering monasteries and the luxurious villas of the Byzantine nobles, almost within sight of the walls of Constantinople. The fleet was dispersed by a storm, and the survivors returned to their place of origin.

But the dream of the sack of Miklagard, the Great City, as the Vikings called Constantinople, was long a lure to the bolder spirits. In 907 Oleg mustered a fleet of 2,000 ships on the Black Sea, and again harried the environs of the Imperial City. He was unable to carry the walls by assault, but it took heavy blackmail (the Danegeld with which the West was familiar) to buy him off. The chronicles record a series of similar attempts.

Meantime, an event was happening in Norway which was to have repercussions far abroad. Norway had been colonised in prehistoric times from Sweden. The population was thinly scattered along the coast in isolated fjords and narrow valleys crushed in between the mountains which rendered the interior almost uninhabitable. Here the Norse race grew up under conditions which intensified all its special characteristics. The mountains rendered communication by land practically impossible. As a rule, only a tiny strip of arable land was to be found at the head of the fjord, and on the valley floor. The

scattered families grew up in the most complete isolation and independence. The fjords and the island-protected sound along the coast provided sheltered water in which navigation was easy, but beyond the islands were the tempestuous waters of the North Sea and the Atlantic, teeming with fish. Here was bred a race of the most fearless and adventurous sailors of the age, intolerant of restraint, the head of each family reigning as a king in his own remote fjord.

Events were slowly shaping towards the establishment of a kingdom over the whole of Norway. The movement was strongly resisted by these independent chieftains. Harold 'Fair-hair' was the son of Halfdan, the ruler of a large fertile district in southern Norway, on the Christiania Fjord, the Vik, from which the Vik-ings took their name. A mighty warrior and a statesman of genius, he was the founder of the

kingdom of Norway. **Harold founds the Kingdom of Norway** One by one, by force or by policy, he sub-

jugated the neighbouring chieftains, and re-established them as feudal earls, holding their lands on condition of their acknowledging him as overlord. There was desperate resistance which culminated in 872 in a great naval battle in Hafrsfjord, near the site of the present town of Stavanger. It was an epic combat, abounding in individual exploits and berserk duels, which provided Homeric themes for generations of skalds. For long the issue was doubtful, but in the end the arms of Harold prevailed.

To say that Harold became the king of all Norway is merely to express the personal aspect of an important political revolution. Hitherto Norway did not exist. The kingship of Harold meant political unification, uniform administration of justice, the suppression of private wars within the realm and the regularising of relations with neighbouring powers. Taxation was necessary to meet the cost, and taxation was a thing which many of the old freeholders, who had been kinglets in their own right, could not submit to. The battle of Hafrsfjord was their last stand, but even then they could not reconcile themselves to the service

of Harold. Returning to their homesteads, they repaired their battle-damaged ships, then, assembling their families and retainers, and taking so much of their household goods and stock as they could, they set sail 'west over sea' to found new homes beyond the reach of Harold. It was almost a national Exodus.

The earliest refugees settled in the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and in the Hebrides, and joined the raiding bands which were harrying the coasts of England and France. In the Isles they found many of their compatriots for whom raiding had become a regular profession. Norsemen had already been settled for nearly fifty years in Ireland, where they had established permanent bases at the chief harbours, from which rose the towns of Dublin, Waterford and Limerick. They intermarried with the native Irish, and a mixed Norse and Celtic population, with roots in the soil, had grown up. This blended race was known to the Irish as the Gall-Gael, or Foreign

**Norse refugees and Foreign Irish** Irish. Matters were complicated by subsequent arrivals of Danish raiders who plundered Norse and Irish alike. The Irish chronicles abound in references to the wars of all these sections, the shadowy figures of Turges, and Olaf the White, and Ivar, son of Ragnar Lodbrok, and Ketill Finn, whose name is partly Norse and partly Celtic, flitting through the twilight of Irish history. In this strange world of strife the refugees from Norway found a welcome and an occupation.

Having successfully established themselves overseas, the refugees began to think of revenge. They turned back on their tracks and commenced raiding the shores of Norway and spoiling those who accepted the rule of Harold. Vengeance overtook them again. Harold fitted out a fleet and came west over sea himself, harrying the pirates' nests in the Isles. They must fly once more beyond the reach of his arm. Rumours had been rife among them of some great new land, lying far out in the ocean, to the north-west. In 860 a Viking, Naddod, blown out of his course by adverse winds, had reached the shores of Iceland, but, even before that, it had been discovered by some of the

Irish missionaries, who had used it as a hermits' retreat. A few exploratory voyages had since been made. Floki, sailing out into mid-ocean, let loose three ravens, and following them reached the new land. When Harold showed that his arm could reach the Hebrides the exiles rose like a flock of sea-birds, and began a fresh migration to Iceland.

In the course of a single generation this large island was colonised by one of the most remarkable communities in the world, a nation of people who had come together because they rejected the control of any central government. There were unyielding freeholders from Norway, raiding Vikings from the Isles and from Ireland, and many of the blended Norse Celtic race, which has ever proved fertile in genius. They had a social and moral code of their own, which on the whole they observed, but they had no central authority to enforce it. They were, in fact, a nation without a state. It was from Iceland that the wonderful saga literature emanated, source of the greater part of our knowledge of the early history of the North and of the Viking age.

The story of Ketill 'Fletneb' (Flat-nose) is typical of this period. Ketill was a mighty 'hersir' in Norway, of noble birth himself, and with his numerous children married into powerful families. When the pressure of Harold 'Fair-hair' could no longer be withstood he called together his kinsmen and made known his decision 'to follow the example of many noble men and fly this country.' Some were for seeking Iceland, of which 'they had heard many pleasing news,' but Ketill said: 'Into that fishing place I shall never come in my old age.' Rather would he try his fortune west over sea, for there he knew many lands where he had harried far and wide. So he settled on one of the fjords on the coast of Scotland, and from him sprang the famous line of Orkney earls. His daughter, Unn 'the Deep-minded,' married Olaf 'the White,' who was king in Dublin. There, brought into contact with the Irish church, she became a Christian. On the death of Olaf she returned with her family, and retainers, and much wealth, to her father's



**IRON-BOUND CHEST FROM A VIKING HOME**

An important article of furniture in the Norseman's home was the chest, iron-bound and with strong locks, for the clothes, jewels and personal possessions of members of the family. They were usually made of hardwood and were decorated with nail heads or metal scroll work, or more often with carved designs

*From Gustafson, 'Norges Oldtid'*

home in Scotland. Her son Thorstein 'the Red,' who had harried Scotland far and wide, and made himself master of much of the country, was at last slain by the Scots in Caithness.

Her father having died also, Unn resolved to leave this land of unending war and to seek refuge in Iceland, where so many of her kin were already settled. She had a ship built secretly in a wood, and loading it with her possessions she set sail once more with the remaining members of her family and retainers. In the Orkneys she halted to marry off one of her grand-daughters, and another she married off in the Faroe Isles. Landing in Iceland, she took possession of a wide stretch of country on the Broadfirth Dales, and divided it up among her followers. This remarkable woman lived to a ripe old age, a Christian woman among her pagan countrymen, and when she died, there being no consecrated land in Iceland, she was buried on the beach, below high-water mark. Many of the leading families of Iceland and Scotland claim descent from her.

Not a few of the kings of Norway had served an apprenticeship in the wild

Viking life. Olaf Trugvesson, who ruled in the last five years of the tenth century, started his epic career in his infancy, and after having been a slave in Esthonia, a refugee in Russia and a soldier of fortune in Pomerania, adopted the Viking life, and harried the coasts of Scotland, Wales, Ireland and France. He joined forces with Svein (Sweyn) 'Fork-beard,' the Dane, in the siege of London, in 994. Olaf 'the Saint,' who ruled from 1016 to 1030, went his first Viking cruise at the age of twelve, and for over ten years took part in raids on the coasts of Finland,

Sweden, Denmark, England and France. He was a seasoned veteran when, at the age of twenty-two, he struck the first blow in the four years' struggle that was to leave him king of all Norway.

An even more remarkable story was that of Harold 'Hardraada' (Hard in Council), who was king of Norway from 1047 to 1066. His kingdom was still largely pagan and outside the ken of civilized Europe; but, as a soldier of fortune, he had seen service in the very centre of civilization, was familiar with the brilliant Byzantine court, and had fought the battles of the Roman Empire in Asia and Africa. When his half-brother Olaf 'the Saint' lost his life and his throne at the battle of Stiklestad, Harold escaped and fled to Russia, where the descendants of Rurik still ruled, and thence he proceeded to Constantinople, where he joined the body-guard of Varangians, or Northmen, maintained by the Greek emperor. By his wit, his courage and his craft, he soon rose to be captain of the Varangian Guard, and he led his troop against the Saracens in Palestine, Egypt and Sicily. Great was his strength in battle, but greater still was his craft in devising



**NORWEGIAN PAIL**

Numerous domestic utensils were placed in a kitchen compartment behind the death cabin—among them this bucket with bronze hoops.

stratagems. He accumulated much treasure, which he prudently always sent north by trusted countrymen to await his return.

He played some part in the politics of the Byzantine court, outwitting George Maniakes, the Greek commander-in-chief. He won the perilous favour of the empress Zoë, which was turned to enmity, however, by an intrigue with another lady of the court. The palace he found more dangerous than the camp, and he only extricated himself from this coil by flight. This was the training of the man who was to rule the stubborn North, and who came within a hair's-breadth of beating Norman William in the race for the conquest of England. He was the Harold who perished at the battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066.

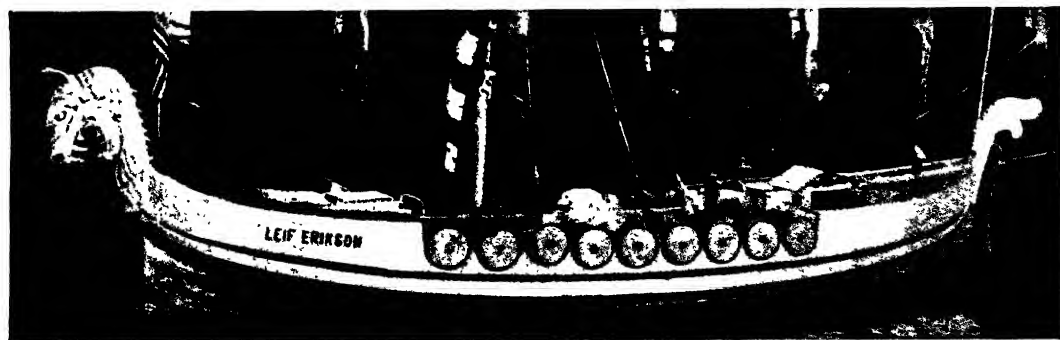
Five hundred years before Columbus crossed the Atlantic and set ajar the gates of the New World the Vikings had discovered America. They made repeated voyages, and planted a colony there, and established trade. Children were born to them there, and one of these American-born Norsemen returned to Iceland, where his descendants were long known. Several of them became distinguished bishops of the Christian Church. The saga in which is narrated the story of the discovery of Vinland, as America was called, was written by Ari 'the Learned' four hundred years before Columbus set sail.

It was inevitable that the discovery of Greenland should follow soon after that of Iceland. It was only a few days' sail

farther west. And Greenland was but a stepping-stone to America. In the year 985 Thorfinn and his son, Eric 'the Red,' outlaws from Iceland (too wild even for that community of outlaws), settled in Greenland. Another Greenland settler, called Bjarni, driven south by fog and gale, skirted the coast of Labrador, and caught sight of the low, wooded shores of Newfoundland, and his report aroused great interest among the adventurers in Greenland. There were many who blamed Bjarni for not having landed and prospected the new country.

Leif 'the Lucky,' son of Eric the Red, bought Bjarni's ship, and set out to see for himself, with thirty-five comrades. First they came to the desolate coast of Labrador, to which they gave the name of Helluland, or Stoneland. Next they came to the sandy beaches and forest-clad shores of Newfoundland, and this they called Markland, or Woodland. Two or three days later they reached land again, and sailed up a great river abounding in salmon. There they built huts and wintered. The winter was mild, and days and nights were nearly equal, so they must have reached as far south as, perhaps, Massachusetts Bay. Grape vines were discovered growing wild, so they called the country Vinland, and they returned to Greenland with a cargo of timber, most precious in that treeless land.

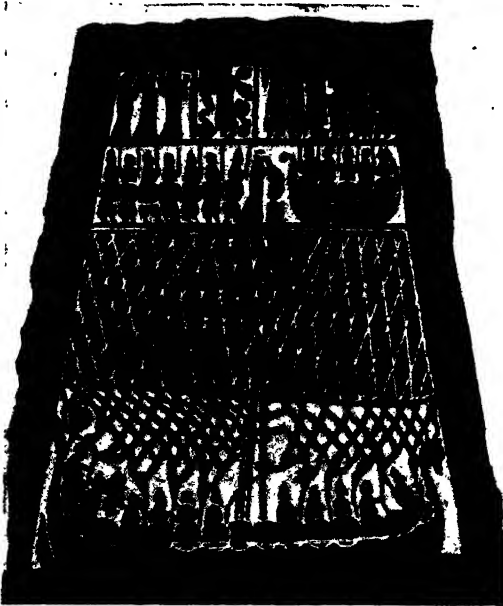
Altogether five Viking voyages to Vinland are recorded in the sagas. Thorvald,



TWENTIETH CENTURY REPLICA OF A VIKING SHIP

How thoroughly Scandinavian shipbuilders mastered the art of constructing reliable ocean-going vessels was demonstrated twice in modern times. In 1893 a replica of the Gogstad ship was sailed across the Atlantic on its own bottom, and in 1926 four Norwegians crossed the Atlantic from Norway to the United States in this 42-foot craft, modelled upon that in which Leif, son of Eric, first voyaged to the New World in A.D. 1000. The crew was becalmed just off New England after 70 days.

Leif's brother, made the next voyage, but he was killed by an arrow in an encounter with the natives. Thorfinn, who had married into the family of Eric the Red, egged on by his wife, was the next pioneer. He took out an expedition of a hundred and sixty people, men and women, with horned cattle, for making a permanent settlement. They built a strong palisade round their settlement, and established a trade in furs with the natives, who, at first, were inclined to be friendly. Thorfinn's wife bore him a son there, who was called Snorri. Trouble, however, developed with the natives, and they became so hostile that Thorfinn decided to abandon the settlement. The last expedition was got up by a sister of Leif's, but owing to dissensions among her followers it came to nothing. That is the last that is heard of Vinland in the sagas. The tradition lingered in the north, but southern Europe paid little heed to the legends of the northern barbarians. It was left for a great sailor, five centuries later, to rediscover America.



**NORSE PICTURE ON STONE**

A Scandinavian form of pictorial art, developed especially in the Island of Gotland, was stone carving. Some specimens have elaborate pictures of scenes from the Heroes' tales, sometimes with explanatory runes and touched up with paint.

*From Bugge, Norges Historie*

Long and diligent search has been made in America for some trace of this first European colonisation. Sensational discoveries of runic inscriptions are continually being reported in the newspapers, but none of them, so far, has been able to stand scrutiny. The Dighton Rock, on the beach of Massachusetts, was long supposed to bear a Norse inscription, and some No relics of Norse America experts even professed to read the runes. They have now been proved to be Indian picture-writing. The alleged 'Norse Tower' at New Port, Rhode Island, is the remains of a windmill built about 1670-80 by Governor Arnold. And so with all the others. The only indubitable evidence that remains is the saga story written before Columbus was born. The culture existing in America up to the time of the Viking settlements is described in Chapter 99.

A survey of the North at the beginning of the tenth century reveals the Viking race, in this particular manifestation, spread far beyond the bounds of Scandinavia and Denmark, its original home. It was firmly established in Iceland, in large areas in the British Isles, in Normandy, on the southern shores of the Baltic and in Russia. On the development of all these countries it exercised a powerful and determining influence. This is not the place to tell of the wars of Alfred the Great with the Danes, of the reign of Canute, the Dane, over England, of the conquest of England by William the Norman (see Chap. 98), of the earls of Orkney, of Somerled and the Lords of the Isles, and of the battle of Clontarf, at which the Irish king, Brian Boru, falling himself, like Samson, dragged down the pillars of Norse rule. The Viking strain reveals itself, not merely in physical conquests, and in the establishment of kingdoms, but in the trend of civilization and in the moulding of institutions. It is to the mixed races in which this potent blood has been blended that we owe feudalism, and representative institutions for the government of democracy, and the federal form of empire, and the Protestant Reformation and much else that forms the basis of Western civilization and culture. ..

# THE GOLDEN AGE OF ARAB CULTURE

How the Moslem World and its Language carried  
the Torch of Learning through the Middle Ages

\* By STANLEY LANE-POOLE Litt.D.

Professor of Arabic at Trinity College, Dublin, 1898-1904; Author of *The Art of the Saracens of Egypt*, etc.

WHAT has been called 'the Golden Age of Arab Culture' covered five centuries, the ninth to the thirteenth of our era, and extended wherever the arms of the Saracens had triumphed in their great sweep of conquest in the seventh century, from the eastern limits of Persia to Spain and the Atlantic. But the culture, though Arabic in language, was not Arab. The nomad of the Arabian deserts had no culture, possessed no literature and could seldom read or write. He could fight gallantly, as centuries of tribal wars had proved, and he could breed camels and train horses to perfection. He had also, like most primitive peoples, a native poetry full of an intimate understanding of the nature and life that surrounded him and professing an almost chivalrous attitude towards women; but culture he did not possess.

To gain that he had to go outside Arabia. He had long coveted the rich lands bordering his own infertile country, and had even sometimes established small principalities on the border; but it needed two things, national unity and a powerful stimulus, to impel him to wide conquests. Both these the great prophet Mahomet provided. He welded together—only for a time, but the epoch was momentous—the jealous rival clans, and he gave them a religion for which to fight (see Chapter 89).

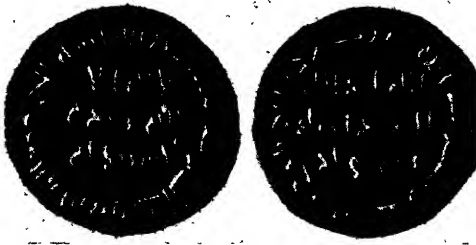
It is true that the Arab of the desert had always been, as he still is, a sceptic and materialist at heart, and 'his hard, clear, keen but somewhat narrow intelligence, ever alert in its own domain, was neither curious nor credulous' about things of the spirit. But Mahomet's

simple, austere monotheism, with its crude and sensual doctrine of rewards and punishments, appealed to him with a curious fascination, and the shout of 'Allah Akbar.' 'God is most great,' proved to be a very potent battle-cry. Nevertheless, however peremptory the challenge, it cannot be pretended that religion was the main cause of the Arabs' sweeping conquests.

A much more obvious urge was a natural overwhelming lust for booty. The rich and ancient empires of Rome and Persia lay before them, both decrepit and internally diseased, and neither able to offer more than a brief and hopeless resistance. In twenty years the barbarians from the deserts found themselves masters of wide dominions formerly ruled by Caesar and Chosroes; and the peoples of various tongues and religions and cultures, imbued with the thoughts and ideals of the Greek philosophers and poets, and trained in the great principles of Roman law, had to submit, almost as serfs, to ignorant rulers who could only speak Arabic and had but one book—but that a master-book—to furnish their culture and canons.

The Arabs as  
barbarian masters

To the Arab, in his superb arrogance, these subject peoples with their noble traditions of wisdom and law seemed wholly inferior to himself, the true son of the desert. Having no learning, no science, no philosophy, he utterly despised those who had; having nothing to teach, he had no desire to learn, and the last thing he could imagine was that these feeble people whom he had so easily subdued would become in a marvellously short time his



#### EARLY MOSLEM GOLD COIN

The Arab followers of the Prophet had no currency. The first to be issued imitated Byzantine types; and not until 696 did the Ommiad khalif Abd el-Malik strike a purely Moslem issue. As shown by this 'dinar' (i.e. denarius) bearing date corresponding to 704, there was no image.

*British Museum*

masters. The only thing he could do or wished to do was to dominate, and so for a century he simply governed the spacious lands he had conquered. The Ommiad (Omayyad) khalifs, who made Damascus, instead of Medina, their capital (A.D. 661), were capable, tolerant governors, and very lax Moslems, who realized that every conversion to Islam meant the loss of the convert's poll-tax, the sum levied by the state in accordance with the law of the Koran on every misbeliever; which, after the first glut of loot brought in by the early conquests subsided, had become a vital asset in the khalif's exchequer. They therefore left the subject peoples to the enjoyment of their own creeds, and carefully gathered in the taxes. The schools and law-courts went on much as before, because whatever legal decisions could be deduced from the Koran were quite insufficient to deal with the complicated cases which clamoured for a settlement on the lucid principles of Roman law.

The early khalifs decided to leave well alone, and cannot be credited with any attempt to forestall the coming of the Golden Age. They and their court poets cultivated and imitated the old poetry of the Arab bards before the preaching of Islam, but they originated no new ideas. They also cultivated the love of wine,

strictly forbidden by the Prophet, and of music, which, being chiefly connected with Greek and Persian slave girls and heathen dancers, was almost equally abhorrent to good Moslems; but they abandoned learning and science to the infidels, who inevitably transacted all the business of the state as accountants and scriveners and keepers of every kind of records. These records and accounts had at first to be kept in the languages of the conquered peoples, for it was not till more than sixty years after the Hejira (Hijra) that an Arabic coinage was minted and Arabic gradually became the language of official business. The subject peoples naturally had then to learn Arabic if they wanted to do or be anything of importance, and they were not slow to perceive the advantage of professing Islam and thus escaping the poll-tax and taking the road to promotion.

By the second century of the Hejira the great majority of those professing Islam belonged to the despised subject races, Egyptian, Syrian, Persian, Greek, Berber, Spanish. In becoming Moslems they claimed equality with the disdainful Arabs; for Islam knows no distinction of class or race. To make doubly sure many of them adopted Arabic names and



#### EARLY MOSLEM BATH HOUSE

Very few Ommiad buildings remain (the mosque at Damascus, page 2356, and the Dome of the Rocks, page 1949), and fewer Abbasid. This 'Turkish bath,' however, at Kusseir Amra in Transjordan is probably Ommiad, to judge from its wall paintings; Byzantine influence appears in its structure.

*From Glück and Dies, 'Die Kunst des Islam'*



even invented pedigrees displaying pretended descent from the famous tribes celebrated in the pre-Islamic ballads. Above all they had to know the Koran. The immense influence which a sacred book may exert has been shown by the history of the English Bible; and that no less powerful agent, the Arabic Koran, recited in every mosque from the Oxus to the Guadalquivir, and the Arabic daily prayers, obligatory on all believers, made for a catholic unity throughout the Islamic world. Arabic joined together the peoples of Asia, Africa and Spain just as Latin cemented the Catholic world of western Europe. But far from establishing the supremacy of the Arab race it uprooted it. Once the subject peoples accepted the Koran and its language there was an end of the Arab prerogative. All became Arabs in tongue, but few were Arabs born. The Arabs had come to rule, but the subject peoples remained to teach, and the tutor in time became the master in another sense.

The old Hellenic tradition inherited by the Romans had languished but never died in the Byzantine period. Egypt and Syria were thoroughly familiar with Greek ideas, and Persia in her many wars with Rome had carried back to her own land much of her enemy's culture. A Persian king had even shown generous hospitality to the Nestorians and other heretics when they were exiled from the seats of Byzantine orthodoxy (see page 2311), and had founded an academy at Jundeshapur, where Greek studies were pursued with the important addition of what Persia had learnt of Indian philosophy and medical science.

The interminable theological controversies which split up the Eastern churches proved to be a blessing in disguise, for they compelled a constant study of the Greek philosophers—above all of



SCENE IN A BAGDAD SHOP

Illustrated manuscripts give a better idea of the life of Bagdad in Abbasid times than any building; and the buildings have perished. This illustration comes from the thirteenth-century 'Schefer' MS. of Hariri and shows, in what was then the world's mart, just such a shop as is still common in the East. From F. R. Martin, *The Miniature Painting of Persia, India and Turkey*

Aristotle, whose logic was made the basis of all theological disputation. In the schools of Syria and Alexandria most of Aristotle's works (and some which were wrongly ascribed to him) in Syriac translations, with commentaries, often tinged with neo-Platonic interpretations of the Alexandrian school, were the necessary tools of theological dialectic and the common stock of the rival combatants. The Syriac translators were little better than mere copyists, but at least they preserved the substance of the originals.

Here were materials for a revival of culture if the conquerors only knew how to regenerate it. The impulse could not come from the conservative Arab khalifs of Damascus; but happily a timely revolution transferred the seat of government from the inland Arab city to a newly founded capital open to quite different and (as we should say) 'progressive' influence. The dynasty of the Abbasid khalifs succeeded the Syrian line in 750, and twelve years later Mansur, second of the new line, founded Bagdad and made it his capital. The shifting of the capital soon led to a far more important change. Persian ideas supplanted Arab limitations, though the new ideas were expressed in

the noble and flexible Arabic idiom. The various departments of government were administered by Persian officials of a very different order of intellect from the Arab, among whom the brilliant family of the Barmecides (Barmakis) were famous and made 'the golden prime of the good Haroun al-Raschid' the theme of many of the tales of the Arabian Nights.

Arabic culture, however, did not owe so much to Haroun the Orthodox, who was a conventional Moslem in profession whatever he was in private life, as to his broad-minded son al-Mamun. The



offspring of a Persian mother, Mamun was Persian to the core, with all the Persian's love of inquiry and metaphysical speculation. He warmly encouraged the study of the Greek philosophers and the translation of their works directly from the Greek into Arabic, and he adopted a rationalistic form of Islam which had a wide influence in broadening the views of Arabic theologians; though a reaction followed only too soon which checked philosophical thought and sterilised Islam, so that it took the narrow form which has lasted generally to the present day.

Mamun's great Hall of Science at Bagdad, with its library and astronomical observatory, was but one of the

many magnificent buildings which the earlier Abbasid khalifs set up in their capital and its extensive suburbs; but it and all the sumptuous palaces which Mansur and Mahdi and Ja'far the Barmecide and many more erected in and about the city have perished. Indeed, the glory of Bagdad was short-lived. A bare century comprised what may be called its apogee, after which it became the prey of Turkish mercenaries. But it gave an impulse and served as a model to the whole world of Islam, and the happy circumstance that it was situated on a great river made it accessible to traders from all parts, east and west. The wares of China and products of the spice islands found a market at Bagdad, and great hoards of the Kufic coins of the khalifs found buried in Scandinavia show how largely they traded with the north for furs and leather and other materials. The voyages of Sindbad in the Arabian Nights typify real adventures of Arab and Persian sailors.

But Bagdad in its zenith attracted more than material trade. It became for a time the focus of Arabic culture. No more astonishing movement in the history of



LIFE IN MOSQUE AND CARAVAN

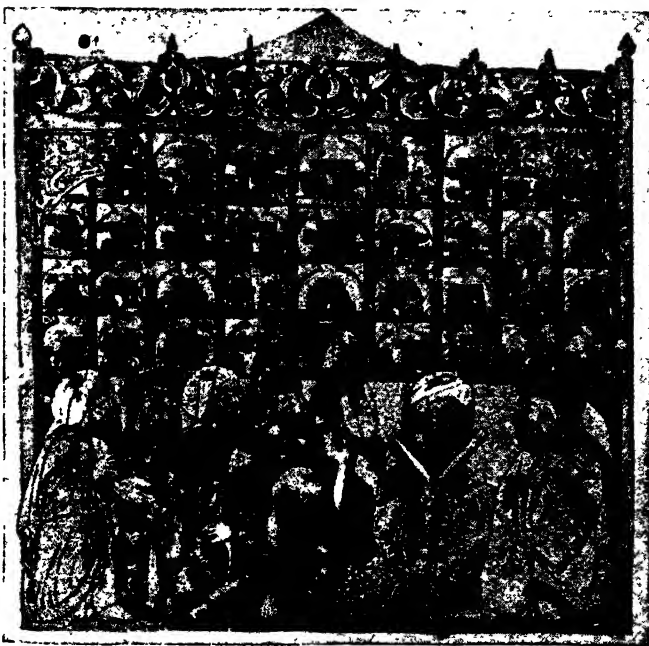
Bagdad owed its short period of imperial prosperity to its magnificently central position; from East and West caravans converged on its markets and wise men on its mosques. The same MS. that showed us a shop shows a halted caravan (top) and a sermon being preached from a mosque pulpit.

From Schlumberger, 'L'épopée byzantine'

civilization has occurred than the sudden passion of the whole Islamic world for culture. Every Moslem, from the khalif to the mechanic, seemed suddenly to have become bitten by a longing for learning and a thirst for travel. This was the supreme service of Islam to general culture. The rush of students from all parts to such a centre as Bagdad, and afterwards to other cradles of literature and science, resembled the later tide of European scholars who surged upon the universities in search of the New Learning, but was even more amazing.

The mosques, which were (as some still are) the universities of Islam, were thronged with eager students who came to listen to the lectures of professors in theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, medicine and mathematics. The professors themselves came from all parts of the Arabic-speaking world, and lectured how and when they pleased, without diplomas or salaries or academic control. Sure of a crowded audience, if they were worthy, they were appraised on their merits and supported by small voluntary fees. Every pupil was welcome, whatever his nationality, and most of the students, like their teachers, were poor; but they helped one another, and living was simple and wants few.

The foundation of all studies was first of all the Koran, but this led inevitably to a minute study of the refinements of the Arabic language, to grammatical subtleties, to philology and exegesis. The variety of the professors from different lands induced mental alertness, and new minds with novel views struck fresh lights like flints upon tinder. A professor from distant Samarkand or Nishapur might be followed by another from Seville or Córdoba; but all spoke the same language, worked at the same subjects, and felt almost as much at home in a distant mosque as in their own city.

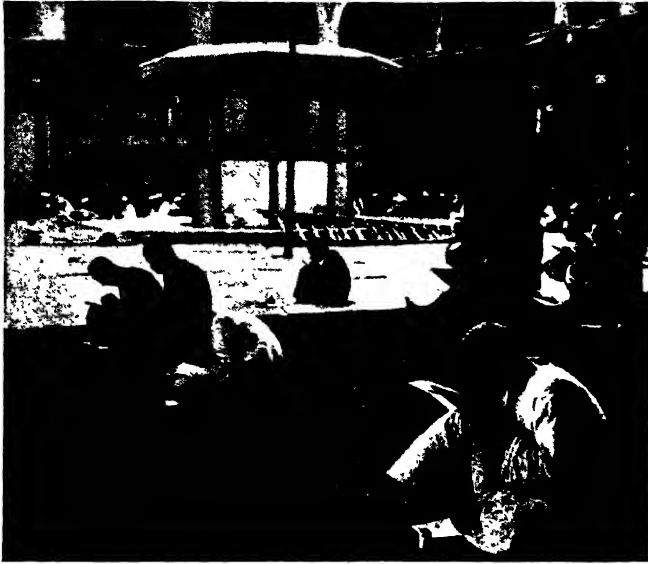


#### RESEARCH IN A MOSLEM LIBRARY

Libraries and learned institutions arose at Bagdad under its Persophil khalifs. This drawing in the 'Schefer' MS., though later in date and not ostensibly illustrating Bagdad, yet shows the kind of scene that might have been witnessed in the library of the Hall of Science built by Mamun (786-833).

*From F. R. Martin, The Miniature Painting of Persia, India and Turkey*

The Koran stood to Arabic philosophy in much the same relation as the Bible did to medieval scholasticism, and for both the logic of Aristotle was essential. Indeed, Averroes (Ibn Roshd), whose 'kulliyat,' under the Latinised name of 'colliget,' became a standard text book in the Italian universities, revered Aristotle as the most lucid revelation of the divinity. If the masters of Arabic philosophy, who lectured on Aristotle and Ptolemy, Galen and Hippocrates, not without some admixture of neo-Platonic interpretations derived from Plotinus and the Alexandrian authorities, discovered no striking developments of the theories of their Hellenic teachers, at least they set forth their results in fresh lights and made them familiar in one language to all the widespread students of a new world. The names of al-Kindi, al-Farabi, al-Farghani, al-Khwarizmi, Ibn Sina, al-Razi, al-Battani, Ibn Bajja, al-Biruni, Abu Mashar and Ibn Roshd—it is remarkable that many of the leaders of Arabic philosophy and mathematics came from the remote



MOSQUE AS EXAMINATION HALL

It was the mosques that were the great universities for the dissemination of the new learning in the days of Bagdad's imperial splendour. To-day they still fulfil the same function, though the instruction is mainly in the Koran; above students are undergoing an examination in the Mardani Mosque at Cairo.

*Photo, Donald McLeish*

lands of the Oxus, near what we now call Khiva—may mean little or nothing to most of us now; but to the students of the European universities in the Middle Ages, in Paris, Padua, Naples, Bologna, Salerno, the Latinised names and the writings of Alfraganus, Albumacer, Albategnius, Rhazes (Rhasis), Avempace, Avicenna, Averroes were very familiar. What medieval Europe knew of Greek philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, astronomy and medicine was learned principally through Latin translations from Arabic treatises which held their places in the schools of Europe down to the sixteenth and even the seventeenth century.

In mathematics especially the Arabic masters made an invaluable advance by employing the Indian (or 'Arabic') ciphers—the very word cipher is Arabic—for notation, and thus making possible both algebra—another Arabic word—and trigonometry, for which they introduced the sine in place of the chord. The Arabic researches in mathematics constitute too involved a subject to be discussed in detail here, but they were more important than was suspected until modern (notably

French) mathematicians investigated their processes. In the field of astronomy, from ancient times a special study of the East, the Arabic names of zenith, nadir, azimuth, and those of numerous stars, are evidence of the observations of the native astronomers. That astrology entered largely into their calculations was, of course, inevitable; but here they were no more fanciful than the observers and diviners of medieval Europe. In the same way chemistry, especially under Alexandrian influence, degenerated into alchemy, a name which suggests its Egyptian origin; 'talisman,' like 'alembic,' comes to us through the Arabic from the Greek, but 'alkali' is pure Arabic, and 'alcohol' very little adulterated, just as Ptolemy's 'Almagest,' translated into Arabic early in the ninth century, is only Greek with the Arabic article. Yet, smile as we may at the alchemists' quest of the philosopher's stone for turning base metals into gold, modern discoveries in physics have shown that some transmutations at least are within the scope of practical science.

Side by side with this amazing expansion of science and learning among the Arabic-speaking peoples came a universal desire for travel. This was not merely due to the sudden expansion of trade, though that in itself was a powerful motive; it was also part of the general thirst for knowledge. The very professors themselves were wide travellers, for, as we have seen, it was part of their business to go from place to place teaching students in all regions wherever they could find audiences—and where could they not? That wonderful language, Arabic, the language of the sacred Koran, was the magnet that drew men to the centres where it was best taught in all its intricacy and refinements, and no city was better furnished with proficient Arabic teachers and gram-

marians than Bagdad, which succeeded but did not extinguish the great grammatical schools of Basra and Kufa.

For example, al-Farabi, acknowledged as one of the greatest of all Moslem philosophers, came to Bagdad from Otrar (formerly called Farab), on the Oxus, in search of learning. A Turcoman by race, he knew no Arabic, and without Arabic no progress could be made. He studied at Harran, a town where Hellenistic studies and peculiar philosophical systems had always been cultivated—the native place of the great Sabian teacher al-Battani (Albategnius in Europe)—and having learnt all that Harran could teach he returned to Bagdad and devoted

**Career of al-Farabi** himself to an intense study of Aristotle, finally settling himself at Damascus, where he died in 950. Damascus was then the capital of the Arab Hamdanid prince, Sayf al-Dawla, the head of one of those provincial dynasties which divided the territories of the Khalifate among themselves when the Abbasid power waned and the khalifs became the mere puppets of their Turkish guards. Sayf al-Dawla, though an Arab, was a true patron of learning as well as a famous warrior who waged war upon the Byzantine enemy on his northern frontier. He was even a poet, and delighted to surround himself with men of letters, including the celebrated Mutanebbi, esteemed the most brilliant, though to western minds the most artificial, of all the poets of Islam.

Aleppo and Damascus under this enlightened prince attracted a notable circle of literary and learned professors, and al-Farabi found himself welcome, though courts were little to his taste. He preferred to bury himself in his philosophical meditations and to live the simple life on a pension of about three shillings a day allowed him from the public purse. His example was followed by many others, notably by the celebrated Ibn Sina (Avicenna), most popular of all those who expounded quasi-Aristotelian thought in Arabic and author of a famous medical 'canon.'

Few eminent scholars were not also adventurous travellers, in days when travelling in the East involved risk; and

there is a vast library of books of travel in Arabic, the earliest being road-books; then great gazetteers or geographical dictionaries, like Yakut's (who was a Greek slave, but educated at Bagdad); and travel books by Idrisi, Bekri, Ibn Jubair and others. The anecdotal historian, Mas'udi, sometimes called 'the Herodotus of the East,' was a great traveller and starting from Bagdad visited many countries and has something amusing or instructive to tell about most of them. Among others he visited Egypt in 942, but has little to relate of Egyptian progress in the liberal arts.

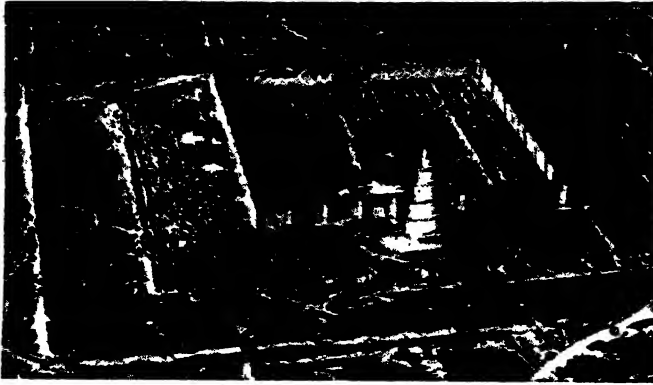
It would seem singular that Egypt of all countries, the head of the great Alexandrian schools, should be so backward in producing men of outstanding reputation, but the explanation is that for more than two centuries after the Hejira it was ruled by a series of governors of Arab race appointed by the khalifs. These Arab lieutenants were chiefly concerned with exacting as much as possible in taxes from the peasants. The wealth and energy of the first really great governor, the Turk



THE STUDY OF ASTRONOMY

Astronomy was one of the studies through which Moslem culture contributed to knowledge. This is an ink drawing of a constellation from a manuscript of about 1300, reflecting the tincture of astrology from which such studies were not free.

From F. R. Martin 'Miniature Painting'



#### RUINS OF THE GREAT MOSQUE AT SAMARRA

Before the days of Egypt's growing independence under the Tulunid line of governors the mosque had been a simple square enclosure. The most pretentious example of this class that remains is the ruined mosque at Samarra, for a time the seat of the Khalifate, near Bagdad, with its strange spiral minaret like a Babylonian ziggurat, built about 850 by Mutawakkil.

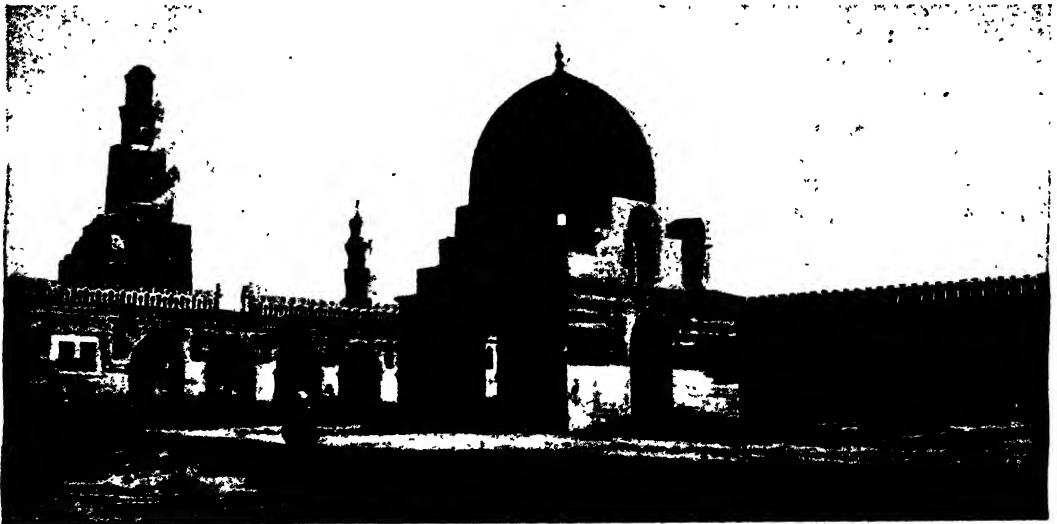
*Air photo, Imperial War Museum*

Ahmad Ibn Tulun (868), attracted men of letters to his capital, but so far Egypt had not produced any prominent scholar or divine. The mass of the Egyptians were mainly labourers, busy cultivating and irrigating the rich soil with little assistance from their governors.

Under Ibn Tulun, however, who was practically king of Egypt and Syria, architecture began to advance. Hitherto

the mosque had been a very simple square enclosure, but his mosque in the suburb which adjoined the future Cairo was remarkable for its great court surrounded by pointed arches of brick and for an early form of the characteristic decoration which is known as 'Arab' or Saracenic. Its architect was a Copt, for Arabs did not cultivate the arts, which were indeed rigidly discouraged by the Koran. It was not until Egypt, in the tenth century, fell to the Fatimid khalifs, a Shiah dynasty reprobated by the orthodox of Bagdad, that the arts began to flourish in the land which had been

renowned for them some thousands of years before. The prohibition in the Koran of representations of living creatures, though by no means universally observed, led in architecture to the devices of elaborate and very beautiful arabesques and geometrical patterns and the ingenious use of so-called 'stalactite' transitions in the dome, which are characteristic of Saracenic art and



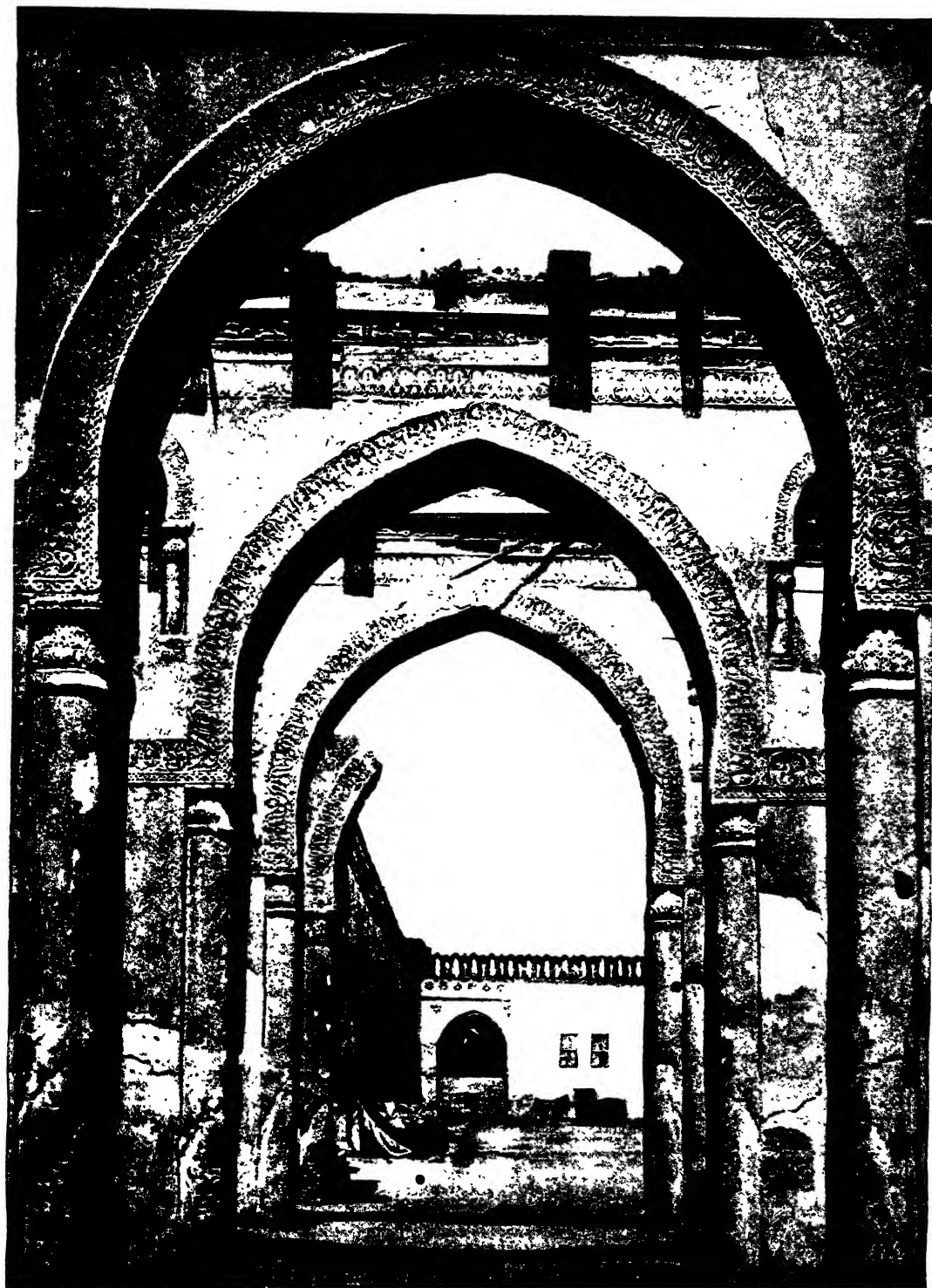
#### LANDMARKS IN THE HISTORY OF SARACENIC ARCHITECTURE

Ibn Tulun, a man of Turkish extraction, was sent to govern Egypt in 868, and under him the land was practically independent. Architecture began to make strides, of which the first premonition is the mosque built by Ibn Tulun himself. The 'corkscrew' minaret, here seen rising beyond the arcades of the courtyard, appears to be imitated from that of the mosque at Samarra, where Ibn

Tulun had received his military training, and other architectural features support the inference.

*From Briggs, 'Muhammadian Architecture in Egypt,' Clarendon Press*





#### POINTED ARCHES IN THE MOSQUE OF IBN TULUN AT CAIRO

The mosque of Ibn Tulun is of interest not only because of its early date, but also because there is evidence that it originated certain features of Saracenic architecture, and of what became the typical congregational mosque. How far the use of brick piers instead of marble columns, and of the pointed horseshoe arch, was derived from Mesopotamia is uncertain, but they never seem to have been employed organically in an important building before. Both are seen in the arcades.

*Photo, E.N.A.*





A NOBLE FATIMID GATEWAY

Noteworthy though the mosque of Ibn Tulun is, the artistic history of Egypt under the rest of the Tulunid house is a blank. Not until the Fatimid khalifs ruled Egypt at the end of the tenth century was progress apparently resumed; this Cairene gateway (Bab el-Futuh) is typical of their architecture.

*Photo, E.N.A.*

attained their richest and most complex development in Moorish Spain, where the exquisite buildings at Córdoba and Seville, and later at Granada, show to what perfection of delicate tracery and elaborate decoration the 'Arab' style could attain.

The Fatimid khalifs, being 'heretics,' had no prejudice against portraits, and one of their great wazirs actually commissioned pictures of dancing girls by Persian artists, which would certainly have been suppressed in any orthodox society. There are fine works in ivory and chased silver and rock crystal in the museums of Europe which were carved by Fatimid artists. Arts and manufactures were warmly encouraged by these heretical rulers, who also held Sicily and delighted in the fine Sicilian

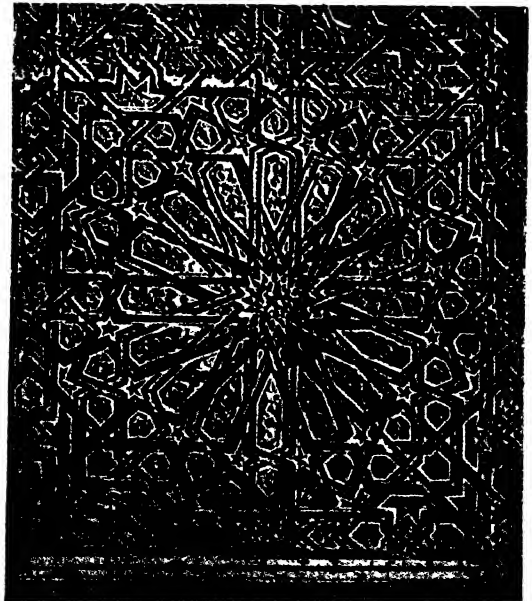
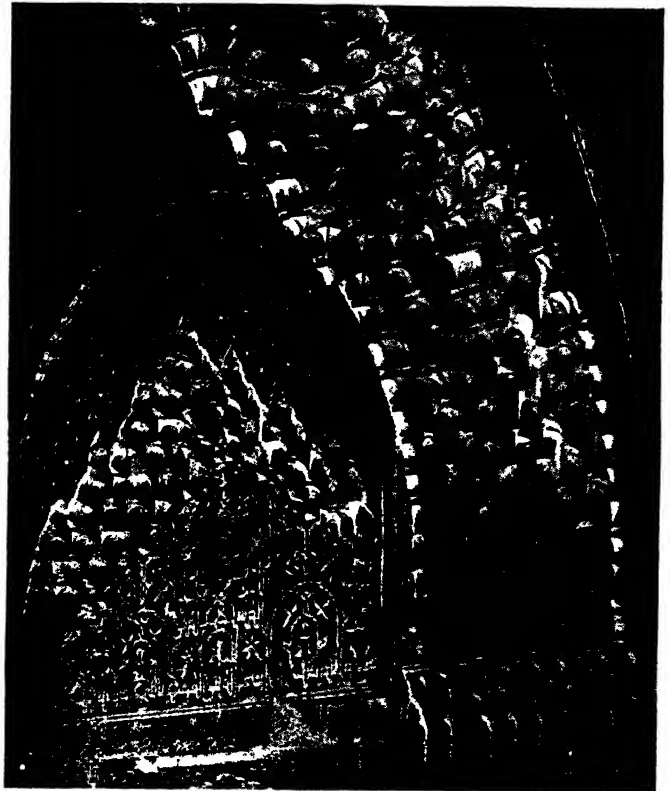
embroidery; thirty thousand pieces of it were found in the wardrobes of one Fatimid princess. The great palaces of these rulers, which formed the nucleus of Cairo, must have been full of wonderful treasures. There were fine pottery with iridescent lustre, enamelled glass, silks of Alexandria and Cairo so delicate that a robe could be passed through a finger ring, and all sorts of native manufactures produced in the royal factory at Tinnis in the Delta.

An inventory taken of the treasures of the Fatimid khalif al-Mustansir, which were sold after a usurpation by Turkish troops, gives a view of the artistic luxury of the time (1069). Omitting precious stones (such as 10 pounds of emeralds or 250 pounds of fine pearls and rubies), we read of thousands of large cut crystal vases, gold plates inlaid and enamelled, ink-stands of gold, silver, ebony, ivory and aloes wood; a gold mattress on which the khalif Mamun had slept; gifts from the Roman emperor, steel mirrors, chess boards covered with silk embroidered with

gold, and pawns of gold and silver, ivory and ebony; four thousand gold vases for narcissus flowers, a jewelled turban, the stones of which weighed seventeen pounds; perfumes of all kinds. There were a gold peacock with ruby eyes and enamelled feathers and a gold cock to match, with rubies for his comb; the figure of a gazelle covered with pearls, a table of sardonyx, a gold palm tree with jewels for dates; thirty-eight state barges for the khalif when he sailed or rowed on the Nile; a carpet made in Persia depicting a map of the world, and red damasks brocaded with gold in a design of parks with elephants browsing on the trees. In the collection were also quantities of arms, jewelled swords and daggers, some with an historical attribution, such as the

cuirass of Hosayn, the shield of Hamza, the famous warrior of the time of the Prophet; and even Mahomet's Excalibur, the sword Dhul-Fikar, the authenticity of which only an unbeliever could doubt. There were tents of gold brocade and silk, with pictures of men and birds and beasts, held up by gilt poles. One of these tents, made for a wazir (1050) who from a sailor's home near Jaffa rose to be 'kadi' or chief judge of Egypt and finally prime minister, cost 30,000 dinars, had a pole sixty-five cubits high and required a hundred camels to carry it with its furniture: it took fifty artists nine years to make.

Luxurious as the Fatimids were, and profuse patrons of the arts, they were not wholly indifferent to the claims of learning. The eccentric if



#### TYPICAL EXPRESSIONS OF SARACENIC ART IN EGYPT AND SPAIN

The restriction on the representation of living things implicit in the Koran led to the development of that geometric and arabesque ornament which is characteristic of Saracenic art, and is well shown by the wooden 'mihrab' or prayer niche from the eleventh-century mosque of Sitta Nefisa, Cairo (lower left). The style reached its culmination in Spain as in the stucco work (right) of the Alhambra, where also the peculiar 'stalactite,' decoration of arches and domes (top) is seen at its best.

*Left photo from Glück and Dietz, 'Die Kunst des Islam'*

not definitely insane khalif al-Hakim, to whom the Druses of the Lebanon pay divine honour, founded a 'Hall of Science' at Cairo in 1005, chiefly, no doubt, with a view to the propagation of Shiah theology and every kind of heterodoxy, but where instruction was also given in grammar, poetry, criticism, law, medicine and astronomy, and to which a magnificent library open to all students was attached. All the men of learning in Cairo and many foreigners used to meet there, and the 'mad' khalif even invited them to the palace, whence they returned, to their surprise, clothed with robes of honour instead of losing their heads, as they had expected.

The Fatimid khalifs had raised Egypt to the position of a great Mediterranean power. Ibn Tulun had a fleet of a hundred ships, but the Fatimid Mo'izz built six hundred in his new dock near Cairo and disputed the command of the

sea with the powerful khalif of Córdoba. His government was just and tolerant, and it is remarkable that his able wazir was a Jew and that the Copts were treated with official favour. It is noticeable that the best governors and administrators of Egypt as well as the designers and producers of works of art were hardly ever Arabs. The architects were Greeks, Persians or Copts.

To Europeans the western extension of Arabic influences is naturally the most interesting and important. The Fatimids with their fleets had brought Arabic culture as well as Saracenic arts and products to the ports of Christendom, but the Saracens had long been in possession of valuable islands in the Mediterranean. For two centuries, from the ninth to the eleventh, they held Malta, and the Maltese language is still a corrupt dialect of Arabic. The ninth and tenth centuries also saw them masters of Sardinia and, far more important, of Sicily, where the Saracenic style of architecture is prominent in the noble buildings of their successors, the Norman



#### ADJUNCTS TO THE LUXURIOUS LIFE OF FATIMID KHALIFS

Crystal ware and glass ware of all kinds gleamed in the soft light beloved of Saracenic artists that illumined Fatimid palace or mosque—in the daytime filtered through tiny panes of coloured glass, at night shed from enamelled glass lamps such as that on the right. The jug of cut crystal on the left is tenth century, but, although described by contemporary writers, no extant example of the peculiar enamelled glass ware is earlier than the end of the thirteenth century.

*The Louvre (photo, Giraudon) and Victoria and Albert Museum*



## MARVELLOUS INLAY WORK

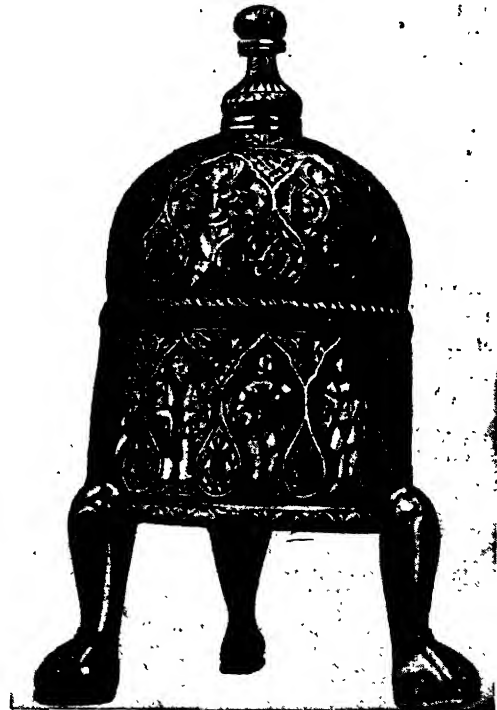
This portion of a Syrian bronze platter intricately adorned with figures and arabesques in hammered silver inlay (mid-thirteenth century) shows the kind of treasure that one might have found in a palace of the Fatimids or succeeding dynasties at Cairo.

*From 'Meisterwerke muhammedan, Kunst,' Bruckmann A.G.*

kings. In the tenth century, indeed, the Saracens with their Arabic culture were the purveyors and distributors of learning in Europe. Even the French pope Sylvester II (Gerbert, who died in 1003), renowned for his uncanny proficiency in chemistry and other sciences, obtained his learning from the Moors of Córdoba, and was duly reprobated by devout Christians as a necromancer in league with the devil. The Norman kings of Sicily maintained an almost Oriental court in the midst of a population that consisted mainly of 'infidels,' and their coins bore Arabic inscriptions. Idrisi, traveller and geographer, born at Ceuta and educated at Córdoba, resided at Palermo under the patronage of Roger II.

Another and far greater king of Sicily, Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (see chap. 110), who became emperor in 1215, was the most enlightened man of his time, well called 'the wonder of the world,' and he encouraged Arabic learning and philosophy with so much enthusiasm that he was suspected of being a renegade. He had carried on a very amicable crusade in Palestine, made friends and a treaty with Saladin's nephew, and actually crowned himself king of Jerusalem. It was not the first time that crusaders had estab-

lished friendships with their far more civilized foes and brought home to the comparatively barbarous western countries the arts and refinements of the East. The emperor Frederick was so deeply impressed by the culture of the Saracens, whose language (and several others) he spoke, that he adopted their dress and customs and carried on a learned correspondence with Ibn Sab'in, a philosopher of Murcia, whose metaphysical ideas found a sympathetic disciple. He founded a university at Naples with the object of introducing Arabic science into Italy, and by his influence Michael Scot was induced to visit Toledo and translate Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle. He also encouraged



## BRONZE INCENSE BURNER

The technique of this thirteenth-century silver-encrusted bronze incense burner is much the same as that of the platter above. It stands eight inches high, and comes from Mosul.

*British Museum*

the medical schools of Salerno and Bologna where Arabic medicine was studied, though the tendency of Arabic doctors to mix alchemy with chemistry and astrology with astronomy made them suspect.

Arabic culture pervaded the universities of Europe, just as the artistic work of Saracenic 'azzeminists' and workers in glass and damascening filled the marts of the great Italian republics, where separate 'fondaks' were reserved for Oriental traders, while Pisa and Venice were allowed to establish consulates at Alexandria. Even in France, in spite of the decisive victory of Charles Martel at Tours which put a stop to the tide of Arab conquest, the Saracens still kept some influence in Provence, where the mountains of Les Maures not only preserve the name of the Moors but even remains of their castles, while the troubadours' lays and Provençal poetry (see Chapter 115) have their affinities with the Arabic poetry of Spain.

The brilliant period of the Moors in Spain rivalled and eventually outshone the glory of the Bagdad Khalifate. The brilliance was due, as at Bagdad, to a

fusion of races, in which the Arab played the subordinate part; but in Spain the Arab element was quite inconsider-

able and the main factors were African Berbers and Christian Goths, with the very important addition of Jewish intellect. It is a singular point that while the Omniads of Damascus took very little interest in letters or philosophy, their descendants of Córdoba were distinguished by their cultivation and support of literature, and their reigns were ennobled by renowned philosophers and beautified by a refined and exquisite poetry.

The escape of Abd er-Rahman from the massacre of his kinsfolk by the Abbasids in 750 and his arrival in Spain with a single follower is one of the romances of history. Tarik and his Berbers followed by Musa and a small army of Arabs had conquered Visigothic Spain some forty years before, but the inextinguishable jealousies of the rival Arab tribes of the northern and southern Arabian factions had made any approach to good government or civilized life hopeless. Abd er-Rahman, however,

had both tact and energy, and in his reign of thirty-two years he controlled both the Arab factions, kept his Christian subjects in due subordination, and gave Spain a noble dynasty which lasted for two and a half centuries, during which the country enjoyed a wonderful era of culture, wealth and prosperity. The drawback was that to accomplish this he was forced to depend upon large forces of Berber mercenaries, which resulted in a praetorian rule not very different from that which degraded the degenerate Abbasid period in Bagdad and led eventually to similar disasters. For over two centuries Moorish Spain was the cynosure of Europe for culture of every kind; but for this the reader must refer to Chapter 129.

Some fifteen centuries stretch between Aristotle and Averroes, the great philosopher of Moslem Spain; and the logical method of Aristotle had made a long and devious journey from Athens to Andalusia. As 'logic' was the instrument or 'organon' of Aristotle, so Arabic was the stream which carried that instrument from the Eastern Roman Empire to Bactria, which Aristotle's pupil, Alexander the Great, had conquered; and finally brought that same scientific method back to a Europe which was then almost ready to awaken to the call of Greek culture.

In the course of the long journey it had become in turn Hellenistic, Christian and Moslem; it had appeared in a Syriac, an Arabic and a Latin form; it had gathered tributaries from Egyptian, Persian and Indian sources; but the stream that carried the precious argosy through all vicissitudes was the Arabic language. The unifying power of one language and one religion made possible that golden age of Arabic culture which preserved and transmitted to the modern world the heritage of Greece and Rome. Arabic possesses a vast and memorable literature of its own; but its greatest title to the gratitude of the world is its momentous service in the preservation and distribution of an ancient and supreme culture at a time when Europe was steeped in blind illiteracy. The magic of Arabic and the enthusiasm of its students prepared the way for the revival of learning.

# THE GENIUS OF CHINESE ART AND LITERATURE

The brilliant Efflorescence in all Branches of Art  
under the Imperial Houses of T'ang and Sung

By LIONEL GILES

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FOR a thousand years after the downfall of the Western Roman Empire China stands out as incomparably the greatest nation in the world. Not only had her material civilization reached a height unknown in Europe and but feebly emulated in the Indian peninsula, but the general culture of the Chinese, their ethical standards and their achievements in literature and art, were of an order that had hardly been dreamt of since the great days of Athens.

It is true that the irruption of the Goths and Vandals into the Mediterranean provinces was to some extent paralleled in China by the influx of Tatar tribes who in the fourth century established their dominion over the northern half of the country (see page 2209). But they never penetrated south of the Yang-tse, where a succession of purely Chinese dynasties maintained the native traditions and handed on the torch of learning and culture during three troublous centuries. Moreover, in spite of political division, the conditions obtaining in the north did not differ so radically as might be imagined from those in the south. It has been well said that 'China is a great sea which salts all the streams that flow into it'; and it was not long before the conquerors had adopted in almost all its essentials the superior civilization of the conquered.

Steadily and irresistibly, Chinese manners and customs prevailed, Chinese ceremonial and forms of government were reintroduced. In A.D. 483 marriage between persons of the same surname was prohibited in the Northern Wei State, which was ruled by Toba Tatars; in 492

the sacrifices to Confucius and other ancient heroes were solemnly restored; and, most remarkable of all, in 495 the use of any non-Chinese language and the wearing of Tatar costume were actually forbidden by law. Altogether, it is a mistake to suppose that there was any general reversion to barbarism, as in the West. Nor was the period between the Han and the Sui (A.D. 220-589) by any means intellectually sterile or historically unimportant; while the heritage of the past was preserved almost intact, social and religious ideas were developing, many branches of literature were being enriched, new forms of art were being cultivated and in some instances even brought to perfection. But, above all, it was a period of preparation for the greater things that were to come: the splendid uprush of genius which is associated with the name of T'ang was only made possible by a long season of germination.

The aphorism that history repeats itself can only be true in the limited sense that similar causes tend to produce similar effects; if **How the T'ang Dynasty arose** it seems peculiarly applicable to China, that is doubtless because Chinese history extends over a much longer time than any other, and it is therefore easier to see instances of it. Externally, at any rate, there is a curious similarity in the circumstances that led to the foundation of the Han (see Chap. 75) and T'ang dynasties. In each case a long period of confusion, almost of anarchy, was succeeded by a short-lived dynasty which was able to impose its will on the warring factions.



#### BELOVED CHARGER OF LI SHIH-MIN

Though his father, Li Yüan, had usurped the throne, Li Shih-min was the real founder of the T'ang dynasty (618-907), the golden period of Chinese art, literature and power. He erected a memorial to six of his chargers—stocky Mongolian horses whose representations show the Chinese sculptor's skill.

*From Chavannes, 'Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale'*

Just as the First Emperor had welded together the last feudal states (pages 1587 and 2099), so Yang Chien (page 2274), firmly seated on the throne of Northern Chou, finally overthrew the house of Ch'ên and brought the whole of China under his sway. The megalomania of Shih Hwang Ti (221-210 B.C.) was undone by the second Sui emperor, whose wild excesses led to widespread rebellion; and the civil wars that ensued may be compared with the strife between Hsiang Yü and Liu Pang (202-203 B.C.). Now it looked as if the work of consolidation were about to be undone, just as the waves of anarchy had for some years seemed likely to swallow up the painful labours of Shih Hwang Ti; but in each case the emergency brought forth a man strong enough to overcome his rivals and erect a durable structure on the old foundations.

Once established, however, the T'ang dynasty (A.D. 618-907) reached its zenith much more rapidly than the Han. Whereas the glories of the latter hardly began before the reign of Wu Ti (141-87 B.C.), the halcyon days of T'ang were reached as soon as Li Shih-min came to the throne, only ten years after he had urged his father to make a bid for the Yellow Robe. There were several reasons for this. In the first place, the functions of a centralised government were better understood. No immense social and

political revolution had taken place such as marked the reign of the First Emperor. For a long time North and South had been drawing closer together, Tatar domination had been shaken off, and everything was ripe for a lengthy period of settled government. The frontiers, too, were no longer threatened by any foe so formidable as the Hsiung-nu in the second century B.C. Those fierce nomads had been displaced by the Hsien-pi, a Tungusic race of which the Toba Tatars formed a branch, and the Hsien-pi in their turn had fallen under the yoke of the T'u-chüeh or Turcomans, whose empire soon extended

over thousands of miles. They were a turbulent horde, but fortunately for the Chinese much of their strength was consumed in fighting among themselves. Several defeats were inflicted on them by the early T'ang emperors, and in the eighth century their power collapsed.

On the west the Tibetans, who had adopted Buddhism and remodelled their government according to the new faith, were beginning to cause anxiety; but their relations with China remained on the whole friendly until 670, when they invaded the protectorate of An-hsi (an outpost of the Empire in the north-west) and began a series of devastating raids into Szechwan (Sze-chuen). We are told that their territory extended over more than 10,000 'li'; 'from the Han and Wei dynasties downwards,' says the Chinese historian, 'no people among the nations of the west had been so powerful.'

For the next century and a half the Tibetans were a perpetual thorn in the side of China; treaties of peace were made only to be broken immediately; and at last the rebellion of An Lu-shan gave them the opportunity of overrunning the whole of modern Kansu and a large part of Shensi. In 763 a Tibetan army actually invaded the capital, Ch'ang-an (Changan), but was obliged to retire after occupying the city for fifteen days.



Constant fighting continued for twenty or thirty years more, after which the martial ardour of the Tibetans seems to have burned itself out, and the intervals of peace became longer. By 850 their power had ebbed so far that the governor of Sha-chou, on the extreme north-west frontier, was able to resume allegiance to the T'ang. This event is mentioned with pride in the contemporary documents discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in that corner of the Empire.

Of all the causes that contributed to the glory of the early T'ang period none was more potent than the character of the ruler. This is a factor that counts for much in the history of every nation, and especially in China, where the force of example in high places has always been productive of magical results.\* The founder of the Han dynasty was a rude, unlettered soldier, whose success was largely due to the shrewdness of his counsellors; he can hardly be considered a great man. Of a very different stamp was Li Shih-min, who received the posthumous title of T'ai Tsung (Great Ancestor). He was the son of a military governor, Li Yüan, and a boy of seventeen when the downfall of Yang Ti seemed to give the signal for a fresh partition of China. In almost every province rebellion was rife, and a dozen ambitious pretenders in different parts of the country were struggling to establish their claims. One of these was Li Yüan, who derived some prestige from his control of the capital, where he played the familiar game of elevating to the throne a puppet emperor of the reigning house, and later usurping the imperial dignity himself.

But, alone, he would have been unequal to the tremendous task of asserting his authority over his numerous rivals. Fortunately for him **Li Yüan's great son** and for China, his second son,

Li Shih-min, was cast in no common mould. with a cool head and dauntless resolution were united qualities of generalship that enabled him within the space of ten years to complete the work of pacification. When, as a just reward for his services, his father had abdicated in his favour, he gave proof of enlightened statesmanship surpassing

even his military genius, so that the twenty-two years of Li Shih-min's reign, politically considered, form perhaps the most wonderful era in Chinese history. His domestic reforms gave a great impetus to education and learning, while his foreign policy created an empire that stretched from the Pacific to the Sea of Aral, and the fame of his court penetrated to the rulers of Byzantium.

The character of Li Shih-min places him among the supermen of the world; his cultured mind and literary attainments no less than his military skill, his power of concentration and swift decision, and above all his large-minded tolerance and noble clemency in the hour of his triumph, remind us forcibly of Julius Caesar. But the latter was less fortunate in his destiny: coming to his life's work when already middle-aged, he was struck down before his task was completed, and it was reserved for Augustus to reap the harvest that Caesar had sown. Li Shih-min, on the other hand, though he died in his prime, lived to see prosperity restored to his people and peace reigning along the frontiers. Moreover, he had the satisfaction of knowing that these manifold blessings were his own handiwork: for though he gathered round him a devoted band of able ministers and brilliant generals, he himself stood head and shoulders above them all.

The T'ang dynasty produced two other great rulers, one of whom was a woman. The dowager empress Wu, who usurped the supreme power in the state for half a century (655-705), was cruel, capricious and immoral—the prototype of Catherine of Russia. Yet the mere fact that she was able to maintain herself at the helm so long, and to govern a vast empire with so firm a hand, cannot but compel our admiration. One of the most interesting manuscripts discovered by Sir Aurel Stein, and now in the British Museum, is a lengthy apologia for her remarkable career; this, when published, may modify the unfavourable verdict of Chinese historians.

The last of the great rulers, Hsüan Tsung (712-756), was a man of complex character, more difficult to appraise justly.



#### T'ANG ART EPITOMISED

T'ang painters excelled in portraying action and movement, which is not characteristic of later Chinese art. This painting of a boy 'rishi' or Taoist genius riding on a goat has been attributed to the brush of Han Kan (c. 725).

*British Museum*

During the first half of his long reign little fault can be found with his administration, except that he was inclined to embark too recklessly on costly wars. But there was in his blood a fatal strain of weakness and self-indulgence which ultimately brought disaster upon himself and the Empire. In many respects, and not least in his patronage of literature and the arts, he resembles Louis XIV of France; but even Paris in the seventeenth century never saw such a brilliant assemblage of poets and painters as Hsüan Tsung succeeded in attracting to his court.

The magnificent stream of poetry which poured forth during the T'ang dynasty, and especially towards the middle of the eighth century, is one of those literary phenomena, occurring at certain epochs of a nation's history, for which many causes may be assigned, and which, when all is

said and done, are still more or less unaccountable. In China, as in the West, certain political conditions seem to stimulate the production of great poetry, and it would be interesting to explore at length the features which the age of Hsüan Tsung has in common with those of Pericles, Augustus or Elizabeth. Here we must be content with noting that under the T'ang, as under the Han eight hundred years before, a new consciousness of national unity and national greatness sprang up, which though it seldom—in poetry probably never—found expression in words, yet influenced the thoughts of Chinese writers none the less profoundly, and indirectly quickened their inspiration. At the same time the brilliance of certain periods must not blind us to the essential continuity of Chinese literature. The fixity of the written language, due to the ideographic nature of its script, is opposed to any violent break with tradition; and thus we can trace the development of poetry in an almost unbroken line from the simple ballads of the Shi King (page 1224) down to the highly allusive and artificial verse that came into fashion after the golden age had passed away.

The most ancient snatches of verse that have come down to us date from perhaps the third millennium B.C. One of these is the famous husbandman's song, thus rendered by Professor H. A. Giles:

Work, work!—from the rising sun  
Till sunset comes and the day is done  
I plough the sod  
And harrow the clod,  
And meat and drink both come to me,  
So what care I for the powers that be?

The original consists of four lines of four syllables each (Chinese words being monosyllabic), and one line of seven syllables. The four-syllable line is the normal measure in the early odes and ballads collected by Confucius, and the seven-syllable line is the one most used in later poetry. Five-syllable lines came into vogue during the reign of Wu Ti of the Han dynasty, and ever since have almost equalled the heptasyllables in popularity. It is in these last two metres that the great bulk of Chinese poetry is composed.

**The Metres of  
Chinese Poetry**

Rhymes are so plentiful in the language that they seem to come naturally and without any sense of effort; but stress-accent, which is the very foundation of English verse, is replaced in Chinese by tonal euphony. As is well known, every Chinese word is pronounced with a certain intonation or inflexion of the voice similar to the tones by means of which Westerners express surprise, incredulity and other emotions; only in Chinese the tone is an inseparable part of each word: that is to say, two syllables with exactly the same sound have different meanings—are, in fact, different words—when pronounced in different tones. Until the fifth century A.D. the existence of these tones in their own language was actually unsuspected by the Chinese, and was first remarked by Buddhist priests coming from India. It was then discovered that ancient poets had unconsciously made use of the tones, though in a very irregular fashion, to produce a harmonious effect.

For the new 'standard poetry' strict laws were evolved governing the incidence of tones in each line of verse; and to this end all words were divided into two classes or tone-groups, the level and the oblique. Many poems, however, were still

written in the old style, and the great T'ang masters never allowed their genius to be hampered by artificial restrictions. The general effect of the tones is to impart a highly musical quality to Chinese verse. Except when they speak, in a purely conventional phrase, of poets 'singing,' Western folk seem to have lost sight of the fact that poetry is primarily addressed to the ear. The Chinese, however, are accustomed to croon or chant their verses instead of reading them silently, as we usually do; otherwise much of their effect would be lost.

Several translations in English, French and other European languages have made the Odes of the Shi King too familiar to need much discussion. Their charming freshness and simplicity are enough to recommend them to the Western reader, who will be well advised to accept them at their face value, without troubling about the allegorical significance which generations of super-subtle commentators

have tried to read into them. These artless little songs, collected from all parts of China during the first half of the Chou dynasty (c. 1100–600 B.C.), have been a regular subject of study ever since the days of Confucius, and their influence on literature has been incalculable.

Then follows an interval of three or more centuries, during which poetry seems to have been ousted by philosophy; and the next considerable poem that has come down to us is of a different class. This is the *Li Sao* ('Falling into Trouble'), the lamentation of a loyal minister who was dismissed by an ungrateful prince and fell upon evil days. It is one of the longest of Chinese poems, running to over 370 lines. Poetry before of irregular length. Every Han times alternate line ends with an interjection, something like the German 'ach,' which produces a curious, sobbing effect. Packed with allegory and obscure historical allusions, the poem nevertheless breathes an unmistakable spirit of sincerity. The vein of profound melancholy that characterises the *Li Sao* reappears in all subsequent Chinese poetry, though it is mitigated to some extent by the careless mood of self-abandonment which was introduced with Taoism.

The Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) produced some notable poets of nearly the first rank, but on the whole its output cannot compare with that of the T'ang. Perhaps the most striking pieces are those called simply *Nineteen Old Poems*. They are anonymous and quite short, totalling 252 lines altogether. Yet the influence they have had on later, especially T'ang, poetry is unequalled except by the Odes.

Here is one dealing with the quaint legend of the Cowherd and the Weaving Maiden—two stars known to us as Altair and Vega respectively. They are lovers, but being separated by the Milky Way, which is regarded as a celestial river, they may only meet once a year, on the seventh night of the seventh month, when magpies form a living bridge to enable the maiden to cross:

Far away twinkles the Herd-boy Star,  
And glittering is the Damsel of the Milky Way;

Busily she plies her slender white fingers,  
And clicking flies the shuttle across the loom.

Never can she finish her task ;  
Bitter her tears that fall like rain.  
The Milky Way is clear and shallow :  
How short the space that separates the twain !

One fair river keeps them asunder,  
Gazing at each other, but never able to speak.

The most distinctive species of composition cultivated in Han times was the 'fu,' which stands on the borderland of poetry and prose, inclining to one side or the other according to the fashion

**Literature under the Hans** of the time or the bent of the author. Originally derived from the Li Sao, but developed in many new directions, the 'fu' has never lost its popularity from that time to this, and specimens of it are to be found in the works of most writers. In passing, it may be remarked that the transition from prose to poetry is rendered less sharp in Chinese by the far greater regard paid to rhythmical balance and symmetry in the best prose writing. Many of the exquisite little sketches in which the Chinese excel, and which form a recognized branch of prose composition, are hardly to be distinguished from poems except by the absence of rhyme.

In classical learning, and especially in history, the Han dynasty is richer than in imaginative literature. Ssü-ma Ch'ien's great work has been taken as the model for all the ensuing dynastic histories. He has been called the Herodotus of China ; but this name, if it implies that he is the first notable Chinese historian, does injustice to the author of the Tso Chuan, which in the opinion of some critics is the most wonderful document in the whole range of ancient literature. Originally supposed to have been a commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals of Confucius, written by a disciple, it has also been attributed to the Master himself. Some have considered it to be a forgery of the first century B.C. But Professor Karlgren of Gothenburg has adduced internal linguistic evidence proving it to be an independent work and a genuine product of the pre-Han era, though not by Confucius or any of his

school. The style, certainly, is something quite unique ; in sinewy terseness it recalls the prose of Tacitus, though simpler and less subtle. It has found many imitators, but none has come within measurable distance of the original.

Another work of a very different character, but also couched in an inimitable style, is the treatise of the Taoist philosopher Chuang-tze (page 1222), who lived towards the end of the Chou period. Here we are transported into a region of mysticism and imagination, quaintly tempered by an element of humorous scepticism. Without being a systematic thinker, Chuang-tze is rich in suggestive ideas which were afterwards caught up and developed by a long line of philosophers and poets.

As we have seen in Chapter 75, the introduction of Buddhism immediately had the effect of endowing the old native system of Taoism with fresh strength. Without going more deeply into the philosophy of Taoism, it will be enough to say that it represents the tendency, ever latent in human nature, to revolt against the artificial conventions of society and to return to a freer and more primitive mode of life. Rousseau was thus in many respects a Taoist, though probably the word **Taoist influence in Poetry** was quite unknown to him.

The chaotic conditions that followed the disintegration of the Han empire, and lasted, in varying degree, for several centuries, made politics a dangerous and unprofitable pursuit ; numbers of men who would normally have embraced an official career found their talents at a discount and their ambitions hopelessly thwarted. Sick of life's ills, many withdrew into solitude, having recourse to the consolations that philosophy and religion could offer. The poetic temperament, however, found little attraction in the somewhat gloomy creed of the Buddhist, and turned to the more jovial and irresponsible doctrines of Taoism, with its elements of romance, mystery and colour. Though the philosopher's stone might be unattainable, wine was discovered to be a 'sovereign alchemist' that could in a trice 'life's leaden metal into gold transmute.'

Poetry, then, during the third and fourth centuries A.D. is mainly associated with Bohemianism and hard drinking. A literary club that became widely famous was composed of seven mercurial young poets who called themselves the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove. All of them had an astounding capacity for liquor. One wrote of himself (in the translation of Prof. H. A. Giles) as

regarding eternity as but a single day, and whole centuries as but an instant of time. The sun and moon are the windows of his house; the cardinal points are the boundaries of his domain. He wanders unrestrained and free. He dwells within no walls. The canopy of heaven is his roof; his resting-place is the lap of earth. He follows his fancy in all things. He is never for a moment without a wine flask in one hand, a goblet in the other. His only thought is wine: he knows of naught beyond.

During these times of turmoil, when Tatar hordes were sweeping over North China, art continued to flourish and the fountains of poetry never ran dry. Within the space of fifty years three creative geniuses were born south of the Yang-tse, each of the first importance in his own particular domain. In T'ao Yüan-ming, or T'ao Ch'ien, as he called himself towards the close of his life; we see the Taoist spirit at its purest and brightest. His proud integrity and love of freedom caused him to abandon official life, and he spent the greater part of his days in poverty and seclusion. His verses are the outpourings of a poet intensely sensitive to the beauties of nature, who is content to daff the world aside, living the life of a recluse in the enjoyment of the simplest pleasures. Such is the spirit that informs his famous poetical-prose rhapsody, *Home Again*, which celebrates his retirement to the country. T'ao Ch'ien is beyond question the chief literary figure of the period intervening



INDIAN ART ON CHINESE SOIL \*

The introduction of Buddhism into China was responsible for the growth of a new type of art in which Indian influence is apparent. It can be seen in the numerous Buddhas and other inmates of the Mahayanist pantheon carved under the Toba Tatars in the grottoes of Yün-kang, from A.D. 400 onwards.

*From Chavannes, 'Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale'*

between the Han and the T'ang. Here is a specimen of his verse:

I have built me a house in a populous quarter,  
Yet I hear no noises of horses and carts.  
Ask you me, how that can be?  
Where the mind is abstracted, locality  
seems to fade away.  
I pick chrysanthemums under the eastern hedge,  
And gaze afar at the hill in the south.  
Fair is the prospect at the close of day,  
When birds are flying home in pairs . . .  
In all this there lies a hidden meaning,  
But words fail me when I try to express it.

Wang Hsi-chih also was an author of no small merit, but his fame rests mainly on his achievements in calligraphy, an art of which he is generally considered to be the supreme exponent. In China, where the script lends itself so well to artistic treatment, it is no wonder that the calligraphist should be highly esteemed and placed almost, if not quite, on a par with the painter. Pictorial art seems to have developed rather late among the Chinese; at any rate our information about painters

and painting under the Han dynasty reduces itself mostly to legends of the Apelles-and-the-grapes order. One or two really fine painters are said to have flourished in the third century, but the first name of outstanding importance is that of Ku K'ai-chih, who was a younger contemporary of Wang Hsi-chih.

Owing to a singular piece of good fortune, this early artist is actually better known to us than any who lived under the T'ang and Sung dynasties; for in 1903 the British Museum acquired a painting attributed to Ku K'ai-chih, which had belonged to the emperor Ch'ien Lung, and was taken from the Palace in Peking during the Boxer disturbances (see plate facing page 2553). It is in the form of a long roll, and consists of a series of scenes illustrating The Admonitions of the Preceptress to the Court Ladies, a tract written in the third century which is still extant. In many places the

picture has been clumsily restored and touched up with fresh colour, but enough remains of the original design to show that it was a veritable masterpiece. The figures are admirably painted, with a beauty of line that later ages have never surpassed; only the landscape is of a primitive character, recalling some of the early Italian pictures. Whether this painting can be regarded as the actual handiwork of Ku K'ai-chih is still an open question. Most critics incline to believe that it is a T'ang copy; but, in any case, it preserves one of the artist's designs, and shows that figure painting at this date had already reached maturity.

About the time of Ku K'ai-chih's death (c. 406), the famous series of Buddhist rock-sculptures at Yün-kang was commenced under the auspices of the Toba emperors of Northern Wei. Numerous grottoes, hollowed out of a cliff, were filled with carvings and statues of



#### GROWTH OF A NEW ART : BUDDHIST SCULPTURES AT LUNG-MEN

Some of the sculptures at Yün-kang (in Northern Wei) have a certain crudity about them, and in most the Indian influence has almost swamped the native genius. But about a hundred years later another series of grottoes at Lung-mén in Honan began to be similarly adorned (c. 500-800), and here we find that the art and conceptions of Buddhism have been assimilated to the Chinese temper. The result is an art virile yet permeated with religious feeling, as seen in these two 'deva rajas.'

*From Chavannes, 'Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale'*

Buddhist deities, revealing the birth of a new type of art. The finest of these images are executed with a rhythmic grace that is unsurpassed; but some of the others show a certain crudity of treatment which may perhaps be attributed to the element of Tatar inspiration. This is no longer observable in the Lung-mên grottoes of Honan, which were begun about A.D. 500, and contain work belonging mainly to the three following centuries. Here we have the culminating point of Buddhist art in China, for, although more anatomical expression is attempted by T'ang sculptors, there is a proportionate loss of true religious feeling. In pre-Buddhist times figure sculpture is rare, and animal subjects predominate.

Hardly any examples of Han architecture remain, and sculpture is mostly represented by small objects of bronze, jade or clay. Later on, the process of dry lacquer was invented, which combined hardness with lightness and durability. That plastic art, however, had outgrown the stage of infancy long before it was transformed by Buddhist influence is attested by the fine bas-reliefs found in tombs of the Later Han, especially at the Wu-liang cemetery in the south-west corner of Shantung (see pages 444 and 1704). In these reliefs the delineation of the figures is simple and masterly.

During the fourth century the influence of Buddhism was making itself felt in a marked degree. There was

**Steady spread of Buddhism** a constant stream of foreign monks entering China, and in 335 the priesthood was thrown open to the Chinese themselves. Large monasteries were then erected all over northern China, and we are told that nine-tenths of the common people adopted the new faith. Kumārajīva was the most popular of the numerous translators of the scriptures: his version of the Diamond Sutra has probably been more read than any other single book,



#### CHINESE BUDDHIST RELIEFS

The engravings on a pedestal discovered in Chihli province are evidence of the level attained by relief sculpture during the period of the Lung-mên statues; it was set up in 524. Moreover, that the pedestal once supported a statue of the Maitreya Buddha shows the hold that Buddhism was gaining.

*From Chavannes, 'Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale'*

with the exception of the Confucian classics. In the collection of T'ang MSS. at the British Museum, recovered from a cave-temple on the edge of the Gobi desert, the copies of this text alone amount\* to several hundreds. Bodhi-dharma, who ranks as the twenty-eighth patriarch of India and the first of China, came to Canton by sea in 520, and thence to the court at Nanking. He taught that religion was not to be learned from books, but that man should seek and find the Buddha in his own heart. This doctrine (known as Zen), which has many affinities with Taoism, lies at the root of the mystic and symbolic art that reached perfection in the Sung dynasty.

A succession of Chinese monks also found their way to India in order to collect sacred books and relics and to visit the holy places. One of the earliest, Fa-Hien, who travelled overland and returned by the sea route via Ceylon (see page 2209), wrote a valuable account of his journey (399-414), and his example was followed by several other monks, notably Hsüan Tsang (or Yuan Chwang; see pages 2274 and 2401) in the seventh century. Most of these pilgrims went by way of the Pamirs to the basin of the middle



Indus, and often did not proceed farther than Peshawar or Taxila. This is one of the reasons why, in the transmission of Buddhism to China, the kingdom of Gandhara plays such an important part (see Chap. 49). Its influence is especially noticeable in architecture. We know that many pilgrims had models made of stupas.

While almost every form of art was being reshaped or even revolutionised by Buddhism, literature alone remained unaffected, and until Wang Wei (699-759) we find not a single writer of the first rank whose work shows any sympathy with the alien religion. This may be partly due to the fact that the first period of Buddhist ascendancy coincided with a barren patch in literature as a whole. For two centuries after T'ao Ch'ien poetry languished. A great deal was written, but very little rose above mediocrity. It was pretty but shallow; or, in the phrase of one critic, 'all flowers and moonlight.'

In mastery of technique the T'ang poets far excelled their predecessors; on the other hand, it may seem to a foreigner, unable to appreciate the niceties of style, that form was often valued above content, and matter subordinated to manner. To him a Chinese poem may appear unsatisfactory because it lacks body or substance. This criticism, however, rests largely on a misapprehension of the ideal which a Chinese poet sets before himself. He does not wish to treat his theme exhaustively, but prefers to leave a great deal to the reader's imagination. His object is to open up trains of thought, not to pursue them at length; not to elaborate the emotions aroused by a landscape,

for instance, but to find just the right word which will give a clue to his feelings. In a word, the essentials of a Chinese poem are shortness, suggestiveness, and symmetry; and it is because the T'ang poets combined these three essentials with such perfection that their work has remained a model for succeeding generations. The artistic reticence of the Chinese shows itself also in their fondness for half tones and delicate colouring; robustness of treatment and strong, coarse effects are not to their taste. It has been pointed out that their favourite seasons are spring and autumn: hardly ever do they give us a picture of summer, which is too opulent for their refined emotions.

A Ming writer has divided the T'ang dynasty into four periods: the first covers about a hundred years; the second more or less coincides with the reign of Hsüan Tsung; the third brings us down to

about 835, and the fourth to the end of the dynasty in 907. Most of the great names fall in the second period, and of these, by common consent, Tu Fu and Li Po stand first. They are given in this order because most educated Chinese, if asked to name their greatest poet, would unhesitatingly give their votes in favour of Tu Fu. In Western eyes Li Po stands out as the national poet of China par excellence; but this verdict cannot be taken as final any more than the judgement of Continental Europe which elevates Byron above all his English contemporaries. Both Li Po and Byron owe much of their reputation to the glamour of their romantic careers; they resemble each other in their



NEGROID SLAVE

Chinese Buddhists were visiting India throughout the T'ang period; and the extent of China's communications with the outside world may be realized from this pottery figure of a negroid slave.

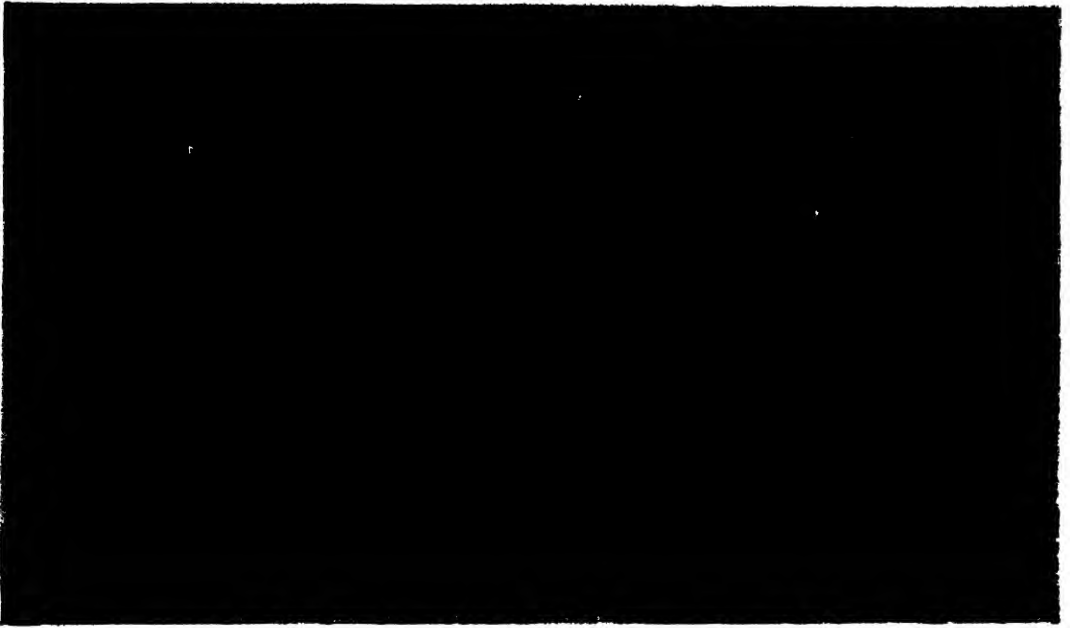
*Eumorfopoulos Collection*



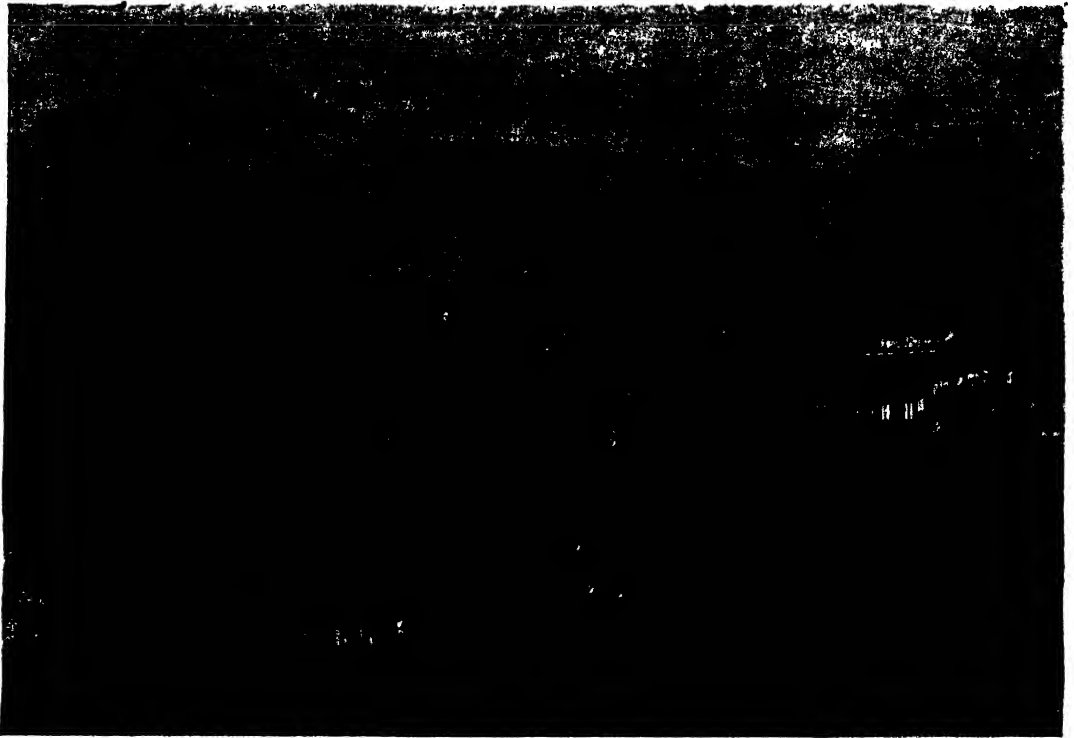
#### BEAUTY OF THE GLAZED POTTERY MADE UNDER THE T'ANG EMPERORS

The horse has a hole for the insertion of a tail and a groove for the mane; the pack-saddle of the Bactrian camel is embossed with a monster's head, and from it hang a side of bacon, game birds, flask and ewer; the winged, bull-footed, human-headed creature is an earth-monster or 't'u kuai.' All these, with the human figure, come from the tomb of T'ing-hsun (d. 728). The vase with its incised ornament of peonies, chrysanthemums and lotuses is of red clay covered with a white slip, painted, and then coated with a transparent pale green glaze; below the neck the slip is scraped to show the red

*From the collection of Mr. George L. Morfopoulos*



It is in the T'ang period that we first become really acquainted with Chinese painting; but the earliest known specimen dates from some three centuries before (c. 370), and by the exquisite drawing of its figure subjects shows that the art was even then a mature product of long evolution. It is a silken roll containing illustrations by Ku K'ai-chih for a tract called *The Admonitions of the Preceptress to the Court Ladies*; this portion shows the bravery of Lady Feng in the face of a bear.



Much of our knowledge of Chinese painting is due to the habit of fairly faithfully copying earlier masterpieces; thus it cannot be taken as finally proved that the Ku K'ai-chih (top) is not a T'ang copy. The portion of a landscape roll below is of especial value, for it is a copy by the great Chao Meng-fu (late Sung and Mongol dynasties) of a work by Wang Wei (699-759), who in the T'ang period evolved a new school of landscape painting; and is thus a link with the work of two great masters.

#### EXQUISITE EXAMPLES IN TWO STYLES OF EARLY CHINESE PAINTING

*British Museum*

impatience of convention and restraint as well as in the glowingly picturesque diction that masks their deficiency in some of the higher poetic qualities.

Nevertheless, Li Po was a true child of nature, and entirely free from the morbid self-consciousness and irritable vanity of Byron. His thought may not be profound, but it is exquisitely expressed, and his verses have the 'curiosa felicitas' that makes the Odes of Horace immortal. He was also one of the most famous Bacchanalians in history; and, though wine and song are traditionally associated, one would hardly expect the greatest poetry to be written by one who was so seldom sober.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find these judgements passed on him by two distinguished Chinese critics, both poets themselves: 'The world acclaims Li Po as its master poet. I grant that his works show unparalleled talent and originality, but not one in ten contains any moral reflection or deeper meaning.' And again: 'Li Po's style is swift, yet never careless; lively, yet never informal. But his intellectual outlook was low and sordid.' This is typical:

Come, let us cleanse the soul of its immemorial  
griefs,  
Draining in quick succession a hundred  
cups of wine.  
The night is fair, and fit for sweet converse,  
For one cannot sleep while the moon shines  
so bright . . . .  
When drunkenness o'ercomes us, we will  
couch on the bare hillside,  
With Earth as our pillow and Heaven as our  
coverlet.

And this poem shows his mastery of pathos without a touch of sentimentality:

To-morrow the courier starts on his journey.  
All night long she is busy lining the soldier's  
cloak,  
Until the fair hands plying the needle are so  
cold  
That they scarce have the power to hold  
the scissors.  
Her handiwork will be sent along a distant  
road . . . .  
How many days will have passed ere it  
reaches the frontier?

Tu Fu's mind was composed of elements more subtle and refined, while at the same time his range is wider, touching the

thoughts and emotions of humanity on many sides. Less of a Bohemian than Li Po, he had something of the same restlessness which made him shun settled employment and take delight in lonely wanderings over the face of the country. Melancholy in grain, he broods over the fleeting nature of life, the rapid approach of old age with its infirmities, the nothingness of individual hopes and aspirations; he lacks the insouciance of his brother-poet, and is unable to drown his sorrows in wine. His verses are more reflective than pictorial in their quality, and often overweighted with obscure allusions; but we seldom fail to catch in them an echo of the 'still, sad music of humanity.' Perhaps, after all, the choice between



ECHO OF WU TAO-TZE'S STYLE

No work of Wu Tao-tze, the great T'ang master painter, survives, only paintings and carvings on stone said to be copies. This rubbing of a snake and tortoise, splendid in design, on a stone in Ch'ang-tu may preserve an echo of his style.  
British Museum

Tu Fu and Li Po is largely a question of temperament. A Chinese critic sums up the matter by saying: 'When two eagles soar upwards, each taking a different line of flight, it is impossible to say which of them rises the higher.' Comparatively little of Tu Fu's poetry has been translated, so much of it being well-nigh untranslatable. Here are some verses addressed to Li Po towards the end of his career:

Long is it since I saw thee, friend Li . . .  
Didst thou feign madness? Truly, my heart  
yearns for thee.

While other men are set upon thy destruction,

I alone have a dear regard for thy genius.

Now, after pouring out thy treasures of wit  
in a thousand poems,

A lonely wanderer, art thou reduced to a  
single cup of wine?

To thy old place of study on Mount K'uang,  
White-haired, it were well to return.

As this wonderful age saw the production of China's noblest poetry, so it

was the begetter of her grandest and most vigorous art. The working life of Wu Tao-tze coincides almost exactly with the reign of Hsüan Tsung, who was a generous patron of all the fine arts. Unfortunately no original painting from the hand of this great master is known certainly to have survived, and we are driven to form what idea we can of his tremendous power and superb draughtsmanship from a few pictures in various collections which profess to be later copies of his work. Thus in the British Museum there is a large picture called *The Death of Buddha*, done by a Japanese artist, and a rubbing of an incised stone, representing a snake coiled round a tortoise. Each is magnificent in design and composition, and makes us realize that the praises showered on Wu Tao-tze by his fellow-countrymen are not exaggerated.

Painting under  
the T'angs

The Buddhist movement which reached its climax in the sixth century had nearly spent itself when the T'ang dynasty began, and it was now the turn of the rival sect to enjoy a long spell of popularity, both at court and among the people. During the three centuries that followed, Taoism may almost be regarded as the established religion of the country. Though Li Shih-min was tolerant of all creeds, and was too enlightened to become a professed adherent of any, he found it convenient for political reasons to maintain the supposed ancestral connexion between Lao-tze and his own house, which was based on the fact that their common surname was Li.

Ever since the Han dynasty, or even earlier, Taoism had been split into two widely divergent channels, the one deriving from the philosophical speculations of the founder, the other fed almost exclusively from the more turbid sources of superstition and



UNIQUE EXAMPLE OF T'ANG ARTISTRY

What T'ang artists could achieve is shown by this more than life-size figure of white clay glazed green and yellow, probably from a mountain shrine in Chihli. It is of a Lohan (the Chinese translation of Arhat, or disciple of the Buddha), and has a compelling fascination, human yet serenely aloof.

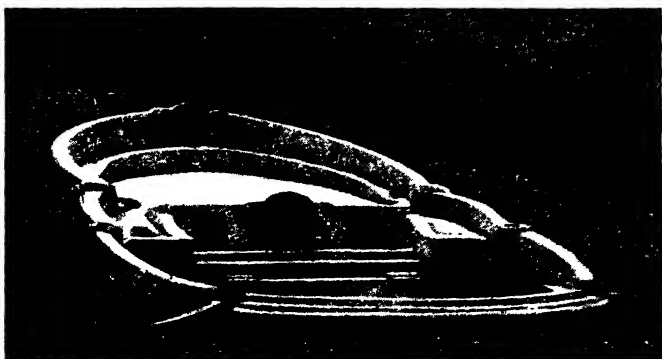
British Museum

magic. In fact, though not in name, these had become two totally different systems, with hardly any principle in common. One of the features of popular Taoism which was much in evidence during the T'ang period, and has persisted in spite of Confucianist disapprobation down to the present day, is the extraordinary pseudo-science known as 'fêng-shui' (wind and water), or Chinese geomancy. It is said to have originated about the beginning of the fourth century A.D. when a magician named Kuo P'o professed to be able to interpret the configura-

tion of the earth in terms of good luck or of bad luck. Hence arose the art of adapting the abodes of the living and the dead so as to harmonise with the local currents of 'spiritual breath.' A geomantic compass is used to determine the direction of these currents, and the unpropitious character of a locality can be amended by means of talismans and charms. The dead are particularly affected by spiritual currents below ground, and moreover can use them for the benefit of the living, so that it is of the highest importance for each family to secure and preserve the most auspicious environment for its graves.

Both 'fêng-shui' in its numerous branches and the belief in the mysterious activity of spirits have influenced the life of the masses in China to an incredible degree. Philosophical Taoism, on the other hand, was something entirely beyond their understanding; it was to poets and other reflective souls that the quietism of Lao-tze and Chuang-tze made the strongest appeal.

Although he would have disclaimed the name of Taoist, Po Chü-i, the greatest poet of the third period of the T'ang, is one of those who seem most deeply imbued with Taoist ideals. He began a reaction against the growing artificiality and obscurity of poetic diction, and wrote with directness and simplicity; in this, as well as in his unaffected love of nature



#### SUPERSTITIONS OF CHINESE BURIAL

The 'science' of 'fêng-shui' plays an important part in the more popular forms of Taoism. An expert claims to determine the 'spiritual currents' of a locality, and the homes of the living and the tombs of the dead are chosen accordingly; every feature of this tomb bears some relation to such beliefs.

*Photo, F. Weston*

and sympathy with common folk, he often recalls the English Wordsworth. His countrymen do not usually accord to him quite the same rank as to Tu Fu and Li Po, but his quaint and homely verse strikes a peculiarly modern note that is very attractive to Western readers. The following piece, *The Loss of a Pet Crane*, has not been translated into English before:

It was lost when snow lay in the courtyard below;  
It flew away when the wind was on the sea.  
In the topmost heaven it must have found a mate,  
For three nights have passed, and it has not returned to its cage.  
Its cry is inaudible, far above the purple clouds;  
Its shadow is lost amidst the bright moonlight.  
Alas! who will henceforth bear me company,  
As I sit, a white-headed man, in my studio?

Two contemporaries of Po Chü-i achieved lasting fame both as poets and essayists. Han Yü, indeed, is generally considered the greatest all-round man of letters in the annals of literature. His moral earnestness and courage, united with the perfection of his prose style, made him the most effective champion of Confucianism that had appeared since the days of Mencius. The sworn enemy of sham mysticism, whether in Taoist or Buddhist garb, he spent his life in attacking the superstitions that were fast becoming a real menace to the state; and it is largely owing to his efforts that



THE SEARCH FOR THE BUDDHA

It is often hard to decide whether a painting attributed to a T'ang or Sung master is not a copy; but the paintings found by Stein at Tun Huang, though anonymous, are authentic 9th-10th century. They are provincial in style, but this one at least (the Search for the Buddha) is from the hand of an artist.

*British Museum*

Confucianism has retained its dominant position in the minds of the literati. Nevertheless, the innate kindliness and large-mindedness of the man are shown by his lifelong friendship with Liu Tsung-yüan, a strong sympathiser with the tenets of Buddhism, whose death was bewailed by Han Yü in a beautiful prose elegy.

The final period of the T'ang may show some falling-off after these great names, but the general level of excellence was still high, and there were many writers whose light would have shone more brightly in a sky less thickly sown with stars of the first magnitude. One of these, named Wei Chuang, who would not perhaps have called for mention on his own merits, has received much attention in the literary world owing to the discovery in Tun Huang of a popular ballad which was famous in its day, but had been lost for 900 years. In it Wei Chuang describes the experiences of a lady who fell into the hands of the rebels when the capital was sacked in A.D. 881. The following lines present an appalling picture of the once magnificent city after the storm had passed:

Ch'ang-an lies in mournful stillness: what does it now contain?

—Ruined markets and desolate streets, in

which ears of wheat are sprouting . . .

The Han-yüan Hall is the haunt of foxes and hares. The approach to the Flower-calyx Belvedere is a mass of brambles and thorns.

All the pomp and splendour of the olden days are buried and passed away; Only a dreary waste meets the eye: the old familiar objects are no more.

The Inner Treasury is burnt down, its tapestries and embroideries a heap of ashes;

All along the Street of Heaven one treads on the bones of state officials.

The style of the ballad is vigorous but unpolished. Apart from its historical interest, it is important as a specimen

of that popular literature which must have been produced in quantities during the T'ang dynasty and earlier, but of which almost nothing has been preserved.

Before passing on, it is necessary to say something at this point about the invention of printing, which

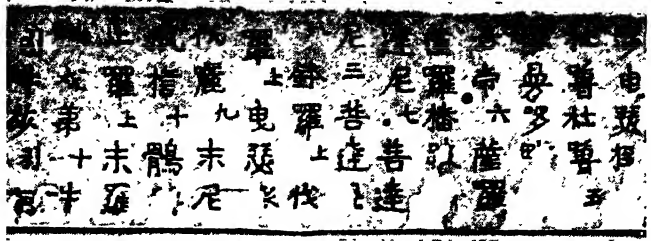
is now known to date back **The invention to the eighth century at of printing**

least. Until the present century great uncertainty prevailed on the subject; according to the generally accepted account, the inventor was one Fêng Tao, a slippery politician who served under four dynastic houses, and died in 954. But some Chinese writers, on the strength of a doubtful passage in the Buddhist Canon, have stated that printing began in the Sui dynasty, or about three centuries and a half before Fêng Tao. The truth seems to lie somewhere between these two extremes.

Among the Chinese manuscripts brought from Tun Huang by Sir Aurel Stein there are about a dozen printed texts, four of which bear exact dates, the earliest being 858; this date appears on a beautifully printed roll, sixteen feet long, containing the whole of the Diamond Sutra, together with an engraved frontispiece. A cursory glance at this roll makes



it evident that the printer's craft had then reached a high degree of technical perfection, and that a century might very well have elapsed since the first experiments in printing had been made. This inference is borne out by an entry in the Japanese annals which records the printing of a million Buddhist charms in the year 770. A number of these charms, each consisting of about a hundred Chinese characters rudely printed on an oblong slip of paper, are still in existence, one being in the British Museum. It follows that printing of some sort must have originated in China long enough before 770 to have been by that time carried across to Japan, and it may turn out that another title of glory will have to be added to the reign of Hsüan Tsung.



#### EARLIEST SPECIMEN OF CHINESE PRINTING

Found at Kichik Hassar in Turkistan, these Chinese Buddhist charms printed in black and red date from the eighth century, and are thus earlier than the roll below. They confirm the literary evidence of an entry in the Japanese annals stating that a million such charms were printed in A.D. 770.

*British Museum, Stein Collection*

Whether or not it was their actual invention, printing seems to have been monopolised for a long time by the Buddhists, who found in it an admirable means of 'acquiring merit' through the multiplication of charms, prayers and sutras. It was only the enterprise of Fêng Tao that caused the Confucianists



#### BLOCK PRINTING IN THE NINTH CENTURY TO REPRODUCE A BUDDHIST TEXT

Sir Aurel Stein's discoveries in Turkistan illuminated the question when block-printing was invented in China. This portion of a roll found in the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas is the earliest dated example (A.D. 868), while its finish suggests that the invention was made a century before. The whole roll is 16 feet long and contains a Chinese translation of a Buddhist scripture, the Diamond Sutra.

*British Museum, Stein Collection*



to follow suit with the first printed edition of the Classics. Soon after this event printing was in full swing, and Sung editions are still eagerly sought after as models of graceful workmanship.

What has been said so far has reference, of course, to block printing only. But movable type was also invented in China as far back as the middle of the eleventh century, and the process has been described for us in detail by an eye-witness. The types were made first of clay, afterwards of tin, and apparently also of wood, since a fount of wooden type—in Uighur script—was found in one of the caves at Tun Huang. The new invention, however, did not by any means supersede block-printing, which (until the introduction of modern scientific methods) was found much better suited to the non-alphabetic script of the Chinese.

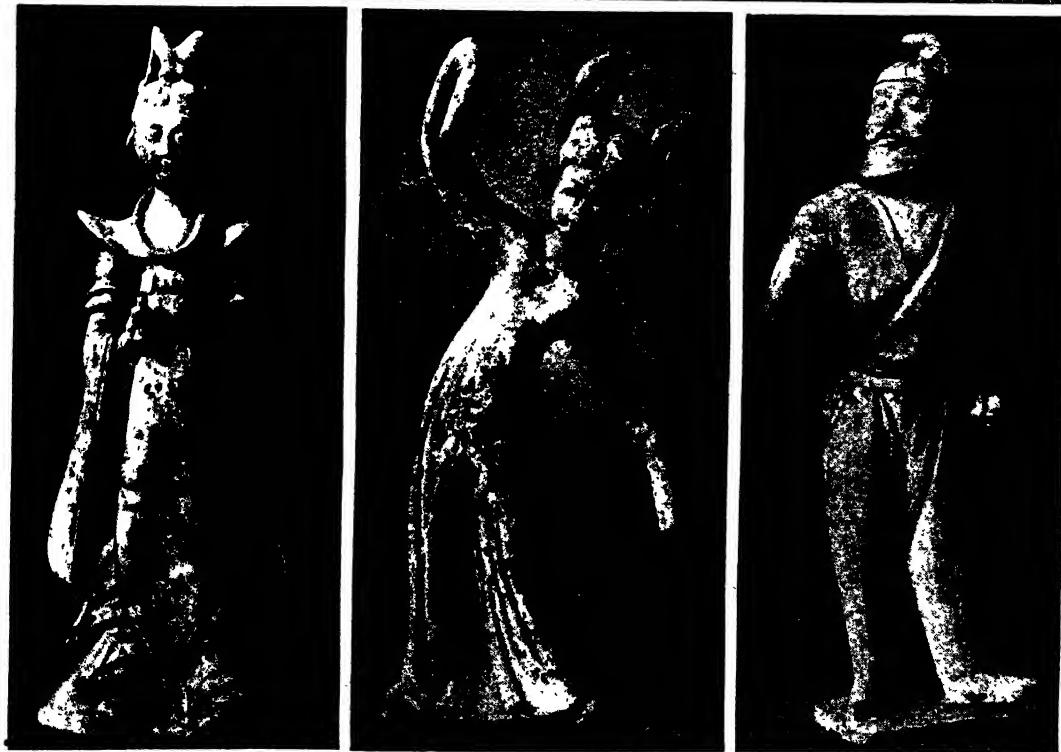
What was the general effect of printing on Chinese literature? For a long time it seems to have had very little effect at all, certainly none that is comparable with the intellectual revolution it brought about in Europe. But it must be remembered that printing came to China and to the



#### FAMILIAR CHINESE TYPES FROM TOMBS OF THE T'ANG DYNASTY

Glimpses of Chinese social life from other than literary sources begin to multiply in the period under review. In pages 2098 and 2105 there have been shown the models buried in tombs under the Han dynasty; these far more finished figures, in unglazed pottery, are T'ang examples. Top, a cloaked warrior (left), with great two-handed sword, and a lady; lower, two more ladies and (centre) a mounted warrior. The horse of the last has an excellent head, but the legs are mere stands.

*Victoria and Albert Museum*



### COURT LIFE REVEALED IN MASTERLY FIGURES OF UNGLAZED POTTERY

Some of these figures, also of unglazed pottery, are of even greater technical accomplishment than those in the opposite page. Magnificently vigorous and correctly modelled is the horse, showing that the one opposite is not representative of the period's best art. The other statuettes are a groom (top left), and below, reading from left to right, a court lady, a dancing woman captured in characteristic pose, and an actor apparently impersonating a bearded man of Turko-Scythian stock.

*Collection of Mr. George Eumorfopoulos*



**MA YUAN'S ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE STYLE\***

T'ang and earlier painting had valued precision and detail, and this was inherited by the Sung school. But a group of painters, of whom Ma Yüan was one, developed a 'romantic' style of diluted colours and blurred outlines, well seen in the *Boating by Moonlight* attributed to him.

*Eumorfopoulos Collection*

West at very different stages of their cultural development. When Gutenberg started his printing-press the nations of Europe were only just beginning to emerge from the long torpor of the Middle Ages, and, except in Italy, literature was still

in the rudimentary stage. In China the conditions were totally different. Printing came into use precisely at a time when her Golden Age was drawing to a close. A magnificent literature, stretching back over a thousand years, was already in being. In poetry, history and philosophy the high-water mark had been reached, and the tide was decidedly on the ebb.

Printing in the West was a secular invention, and used for secular ends. By promoting the spread of education it helped to undermine the dominant position of the Roman church, and was one of the prime causes of the Reformation. In China, as we have seen, it was the Buddhist church that first realized the enormous potentialities of the new invention, and turned them to good account for purposes of propaganda. In the end, however, thanks to the foresight of Fêng Tao, the benefits of printing were equally shared by the Confucianists; indeed, the Confucian revival that took place under the Sung dynasty may be indirectly traced to the wide dissemination of the Classics made possible by printing.

When the Empire was once more united under Chao K'uang-yin (A.D. 960) hopes at first ran high; it almost looked as if the golden era of T'ang might be repeated. But during the fifty odd years of civil strife and ephemeral dynasties which followed the final collapse of T'ang, a new enemy had been gathering strength in the north. The constant succession of hordes that threatened the northern frontiers of China from century to century,

is apt to be bewildering; but it simplifies matters to remember that these tribes, who used to be lumped together under the comprehensive name of Tatars, really belong to two main stocks, the Turko-Scythian and the Tungusic. The former

includes the Hsiung-nu, Yüeh-chih, Juan-juan, Turcomans, Uighurs and ~~Mongols~~; while the Tungusic races that figure prominently in Chinese history are the Hsien-pi, T'u-yüehun, Toba Tatars, Khitans, Nü-chên and Manchus.

It may be noted that the hegemony tends to swing in alternate periods from one side to the other: thus, the Hsiung-nu were displaced by the Hsien-pi; the Turcomans and Uighurs were succeeded by the Khitans and Nü-chên, and these again by the Mongols. The Khitans, then, who now appear on the scene, were descendants of the Hsien-pi, and issued from the same haunts. Early in the tenth century their empire was extended in every direction by Apaoki, and by the time the house of Sung had established itself the Khitans occupied a large slice of territory south of the Great Wall, from which it was found impossible to eject them. During the eleventh century it was all the Chinese could do to maintain themselves in their capital F'ien-liang, just south of the Yellow River.

The tide of invasion was only stayed for the moment by the sudden rise of another Tungusic tribe, the Nü-chên, under their great ruler Akuta, who first destroyed the Khitans and then proceeded to harass the Chinese more unmercifully than their previous enemies had done. This second wave of barbarian invaders forced the Chinese court to flee south of the Yangtse. After the interval of a century a third and last wave—the all-conquering Mongols—rolled up and swept with irresistible force over the country, penetrating as far south as Annam. For the first time in history the whole of China was brought under an alien yoke.

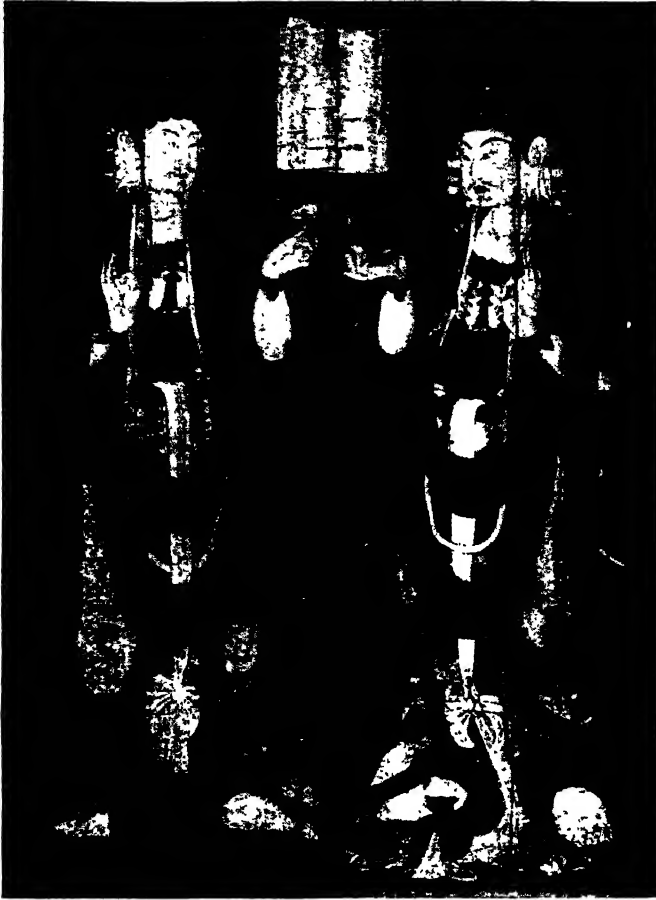
The Sung dynasty (A.D. 960–1279), it will be seen, had peculiar difficulties to contend with from first to last. It is all the more remarkable that it should have been able to foster a literature and an art which stand second only to those of T'ang. There may not be the same originality and grandeur of conception that we discover in the T'ang authors; but, by way of compensation, the quality both of the verse and the prose is more limpid, musical and refined. The rules of composition were more studied, the phraseology more polished. Among the writers of the eleventh century, which was marvellously rich in talent, two claim special notice. Ou-yang Hsiu, historian, essayist and poet, is one of the acknowledged masters of literary style, and a peculiar grace seems to emanate from all



BIRD ON THE BOUGH : A GEM OF SUNG ART

A product of the Sung school of painting more normal than the misty landscapes of Li T'ang and Ma Yüan is this charming study of a bird on a bough by an anonymous artist; every feather and the veining of every leaf have their place. But the same feeling for nature that informs Sung poetry is evident in both.

*Eumorfopoulos Collection*



#### PAINTING OF A BUDDHIST DIVINITY

Of painting in the service of religion under the Sung an extremely fine example comes from the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas at Tun Huang. It shows Kuanyin (Chinese for the Indian Bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara) under two forms : holding a willow twig (left) and a vase of ambrosia (right).

*British Museum*

his writings. To the sincerity and simplicity of T'ao Ch'ien, with whom he has many features in common, he joins a gentle serenity of outlook which, without separating him from the world, raises him above its petty vexations. His lightness of touch, and the charm with which he can invest truly philosophic thought, may be seen to advantage in two of his most admired compositions, *The Old Drunkard's Arbour* and *The Autumn Dirge*.

Of equal versatility and even more commanding genius is Ou-yang Hsiu's younger contemporary and friend Su Tung-p'o, whose place in the very front rank of Chinese poets cannot be disputed. He combines elegance with deep feeling,

and his descriptions of nature are suffused with a romantic glow of haunting beauty such as we find in no other Chinese poet, either before or after. Needless to say, he suffers much in translation. This is a specimen of the impressionistic poem which the Chinese call a 'stop-short' :

A single hour in an evening of spring is worth a fortune of gold,

When the flowers exhale pure scents and the moon is half-seen amid clouds.

Faintly the sound of music is borne from yon high banquetting hall,

And a garden-swing is being rocked somewhere in the darkness.

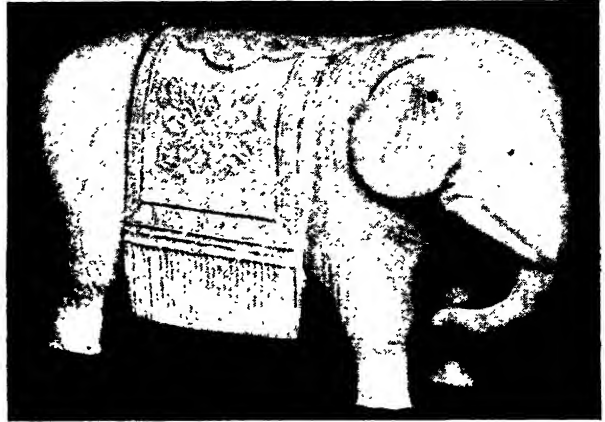
The same intimate feeling for nature in all her aspects permeates Sung painting. We know little or nothing about the landscape art of T'ang, but it is hard to imagine that it reached sublimer heights than are revealed in the pictures attributed to Kuo Hsi, Mi Fei and other Sung masters. The religious painting of the time is not less renowned ; the majestic, superhuman figures of Buddhist saints which tradition ascribes, rightly or wrongly, to the brush of Li Lung-mien show a balance and

harmony of design and colour that can only be paralleled in Western art by the masterpieces of Raphael.

In the domain of history and philosophy the Sung period may be pronounced definitely superior to the T'ang. Ssü-ma Kuang's *Mirror of History*, the fruit of twenty years of unremitting toil, was the most comprehensive as well as the most brilliantly written work of its kind that had appeared since the Han dynasty ; and one has to go back further still in order to meet with any philosophical speculations that can compare, in originality and depth, with the Confucianist system that was gradually evolved by a school of Sung thinkers and culminated in

the work of Chu Hsi. Of that system it would be impossible to give even an outline here, but it may be said briefly that Chu Hsi completed the task begun by Han Yü; he did not transform Confucianism into something different, as is often asserted, but gave it a philosophical setting which secured it against hostile attacks. His interpretations of the classical books served the same end, and have generally been accepted as decisive from that day to this.

In taking a general survey of Chinese literature, one cannot help being struck by its very slow growth and its tenacious adherence to approved forms. Fresh departures and sudden developments are rare, but when once a new literary form has won recognition it passes into the national heritage and tends to reappear in each succeeding generation. Thus, the five-word and



**TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF SUNG PORCELAIN**

The commonest Sung porcelain, known as Ting Yao, was made at Ting-chou in Chihli province, one of its two main varieties being white (Pai Ting) and the other clay-coloured (T'u Ting); both were glazed a creamy white. This sturdy elephant is of the T'u Ting variety.

*Eumorfopoulos Collection*

seven-word metres which were introduced in the Earlier Han dynasty formed the vehicle of the beautiful lyrics composed in the age of T'ang, and no change of fashion has been able to displace them since. Likewise, the rules of prosody which were formulated at least thirteen hundred years ago, artificial though they were in many respects, have always remained in force, and it is only since the Revolution of 1911 that they have been seriously challenged.



**• PERFECT SHAPE MARRIED TO PERFECT COLOUR : GLAZED POTTERY OF SUNG DATE**

We do not know when porcelain was first made in China; the Han dynasty is suggested by literary evidence, but the earliest examples that we possess are Sung. All of them are coated with monochrome or multi-coloured glazes, and rarely if ever painted like later wares. Left, vase of Tz'u-chou ware; centre, chrysanthemum pot in brown and white; right, Ko Yao crackle ware. The last results from a process invented in the twelfth century by a potter called Chang, who was probably taken by the 'crackling' produced accidentally through imperfect firing.

*Collection of Mr. George Eumorfopoulos*



The same conservatism shows itself in every department of literature. The first 'standard' history, written by Ssü-ma Ch'ien in the first century B.C., has been followed at intervals by twenty-three others, all modelled on similar lines. Many of the essays, memorials and dissertations produced in the Sung period, about the time of the Battle of Hastings, might have been written by Chinese contemporaries of Cicero for all the change that is observable in the language and style. This extreme slowness in development, which our more restless minds can hardly distinguish from

stagnation, must be attributed in some measure to the fixed and unalterable nature of the written language. 'Littera scripta manet' is an adage that applies with exceptional truth to Chinese. A character, standing as it does not for a sound but for an idea, is just as intelligible now as it was two or three thousand years ago.

All spoken languages are subject to change, Chinese like any other. There is no doubt that the pronunciation of Chinese in the T'ang period was very different from what it is to-day; and if this change of pronunciation had been reflected in the script the Chinese would have even more difficulty in reading Li Po than Englishmen have in reading Langland and Chaucer. As it is, the whole of their ancient literature is open to anyone who has learned the characters, which are exempt from changes of spelling and for the most part retain the meanings that they bore in the time of Confucius.

The great writers of China can therefore count on 'immortality' in a fuller sense than those of the West. Since their work remains accessible for an indefinite period, literary forms tend to become stereotyped, and there is less incentive to strike out new paths. With all the accumulated cream of past literature at their disposal, one cannot wonder that the Chinese are conservative in their taste and inclined to look askance at innovations. It seems to have required the violent shock of the Mongol conquest to throw them temporarily out of their time-honoured grooves; at any rate, it was during the comparatively short dynasty founded by Kublai Khan (see Chap. 111) that two virgin fields, the drama and the novel, were first brought under cultivation.



**WOOD CARVING FROM A CHINESE TEMPLE**

In its own sphere, that of wood sculpture, this Sung figure of Kuanyin almost ranks beside the pottery Lohan in page 2554. It is built up of many pieces of wood and was once covered with a thin surface of gesso brilliantly painted, much of which has worn off and some been restored.

*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

# A STUDY OF AMERICAN ORIGINS

The Stone Age Civilizations of the New World\*  
 .. with Special Reference to the Maya and Pre-Inca

By THOMAS A. JOYCE

Deputy Keeper, Department of Ethnography, British Museum; Author of *Maya and Mexican Archaeology*, *Maya and Mexican Art*, etc.

THE voyage of Leif the Lucky, mentioned in Chapter 96, introduces at least the suggestion of a spacious country lying far across the Atlantic and provides a suitable opportunity for a short review of aboriginal America. The enormous double continent, with its mountain 'backbone' continuous from the northernmost Rockies to the Antarctic, was the home of a very large number of tribes showing a far greater physical homogeneity than those which peopled the Old World, accompanied, seemingly, by great cultural diversity. But a comprehensive survey of New World cultures tends to show that this diversity is more apparent than real, and that the beliefs, social structure and even material culture of the great organized semi-civilizations of Central America and Peru were developed from primitive ideas and processes almost identical with those of the lowliest tribes in the continent. In fact, there is no such basic difference as exists, for instance, between the Occidental and Oriental in the Old World.

The American continents, stretching practically from pole to pole, present every variety of climate, altitude and physical surroundings, from arid deserts to sweltering jungle; and the enormous variety of environment was necessarily reflected in the material culture of the aborigines.

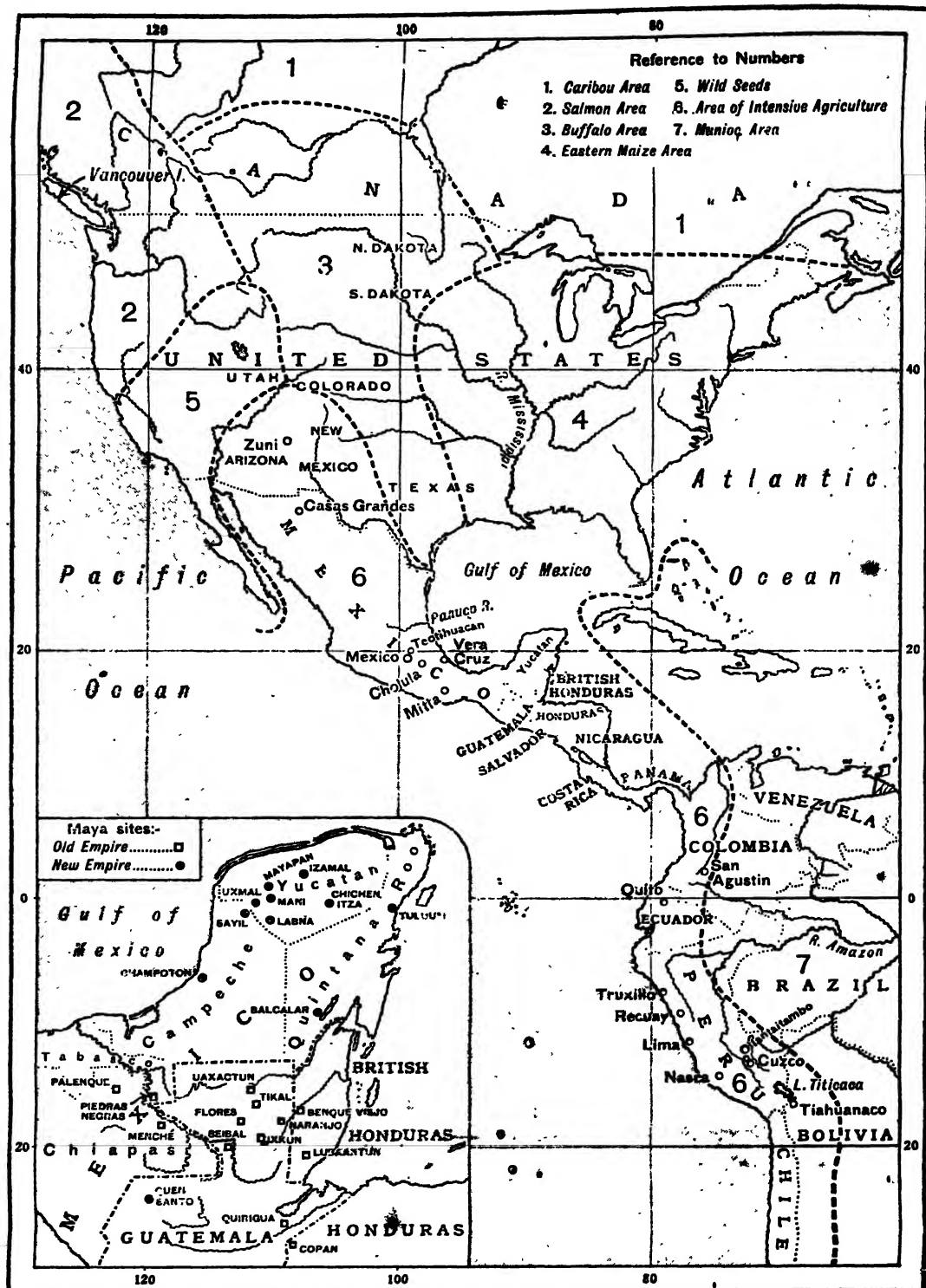
As far as is known, the American aborigines were brown-skinned, the quality of brown varying almost from what is known as yellow to a not very deep chocolate. Their hair was universally long and straight (the microscopic section shows a circle and not the oval of most Europeans), and was universally scanty on face and body. As regards skull

formation, two types are found which shade one into the other. These are the relatively long heads and the relatively broad heads. The long-heads show a comparatively aquiline development of face, while the broad-heads display a more infantile type of physiognomy. Now the two qualities of skin-colour and hair bring the American into closer relationship with the eastern Asiatic than with any other variety of mankind; and, though long-headed and broad-headed stocks are found in Europe, the long-headed and broad-headed types in America correspond respectively to the northern and southern Mongoloid peoples of Asia.

The next question that arises is the origin of the American population—whether truly indigenous; whether introduced from Europe; whether from Asia; or whether a combination of two or more elements. Origin of the American peoples

Now, in the first place no creature from which Man could have been evolved has been discovered, even in fossil form, in America—not even a tailless ape. Secondly, no human remains, or implements attributable to human agency, have been found in geological surroundings which can give them an antiquity even remotely comparable with that of palaeolithic man in Europe. These two facts, combined with the undoubted similarities which the American aborigines bear to the peoples of Eastern Asia, seem to preclude the possibility of an independent origin for Man in America.

The use of the word 'palaeolithic' in the last paragraph suggests a momentary digression. The terms 'palaeolithic' and 'neolithic' in Old World archaeology imply not only a definite technique in the



### IMPORTANT SITES AND CULTURAL AREAS OF PREHISTORIC AMERICA

The complex tribal names of pre-Columbian America can be simplified into a scheme of cultural areas; it should be noted that the 'Buffalo Area' in prehistoric times, as shown above, was probably more restricted than it later became. The chief civilizations that arose were confined to the area of intensive agriculture: the Maya in Honduras, Guatemala and (later) Yucatan, and the pre-Inca between southern Colombia and Bolivia. The Aztec and Inca regimes (see Chap. 132) were founded on these.

After Clark Wissler

preparation of stone implements, but a definite period in human advancement (see Chap. 6). Now the palaeolithic remains of Europe belong to geological formations thousands of years older than any of those in America which show evidence of man's handiwork, and the terms 'palaeolithic' and 'neolithic,' as applied to America, refer only to type, and bear no reference to age.

Three points must be borne in mind. First, that no implements of *early* palaeolithic type have been found in America comparable with those of Europe. Secondly, that implements of the later palaeolithic form have been found together with those of neolithic type. Thirdly, that, in the production of an implement of neolithic type, flaking on palaeolithic lines precedes the secondary flaking characteristic of neolithic technique, and many of the so-called palaeoliths of America are rejects or 'wasters,' which the artisan knew could not be shaped to the proper pattern.

America was, in fact, in the neolithic age. Gold was known in certain districts, but gold is too soft to be of use as a tool.

Copper, again, was known and **Rare use of Metals** used over a large part of both American continents. But only in very restricted areas was it used for the manufacture of implements, and only extensively in those where the ore was so associated with tin (cassiterite) that the resultant implement was an accidental bronze. For the most part copper was used as an ornament only, and the chief interest of the higher expressions of American culture lies in the fact that they were essentially based upon a Stone Age technique.

To return, therefore, to the main theme: since it is highly improbable that Man arose in the American continent, he must have arrived either from the east or the west. As regards the eastern route, from Europe, there are three possibilities. First there is the North Atlantic route by way of the Faroes, Iceland, Greenland and Labrador; but even if Leif Ericsson achieved the passage, the three formidable stretches of open sea involved in the crossing would present an effectual barrier to primitive man.

Secondly, the trade winds and mid-Atlantic currents might bring an accidental craft to Central America; but this route would hardly suffice for a stream of immigration sufficient to people a continent which presented, in Central America, a high degree of civilization before the birth of Christ. There remains the fabled Atlantis, the continent connecting Africa and South America, which on the authority of Plato is credited with being the link between Egyptian and Central American civilization. So much nonsense has been written around this legend that it is advisable to deal with it here.

In the first place, the question is principally geological. Geologists agree in the main that there once existed a land connexion (or **The fable at any rate a mid-Atlantic of Atlantis** continent) which provided a bridge between the Old and New Worlds. But they agree that it had disappeared long before the existence of Man. Again, the very source of the legend is suspect; Plato, though a philosopher (perhaps because he was a philosopher), was a novelist. He had the habit of illustrating certain points in his argument by anecdotes, frankly imaginative. It is, moreover, incredible that if it were a current tradition in the Old World this Atlantis story, claimed to have been received from Egyptian sources, should have been unknown to Homer, Hesiod and above all Herodotus (who visited Egypt), and should never have appeared in literature until the comparatively late time of Plato.

On the Asiatic side, however, attention is immediately focussed upon Bering Strait, where the gap between the two continents is only some forty miles; and I cannot do better than quote the words of Professor Holmes, who has made a thorough study of the possible avenues of approach to the Americas from the Old World:

Among the possible gateways to America, interest centres chiefly around that of Bering Strait. The distance from land to land is only 40 miles, and during especially frigid seasons ice forms a bridge so complete that crossing becomes a question only of the presence of migrating peoples and warm clothing and food supply for the journey. Here, then, supposing no important modification of geographical conditions, there

has ever been an open thoroughfare from Asia to America for peoples of a culture sufficiently matured to enable them to withstand the rigours of Arctic climates. The question of complete land-connexion between the continents in Tertiary and Quaternary times, and especially in the warmer interglacial periods, has been much discussed, but the solution, whether for or against the connexion, cannot materially affect the case, since up to the present time no evidence has been found that man existed in this part of the world before or during the glacial period.

Other suggestions have been made for possible migration routes from Asia, such as the chain of islands, the Commander and Aleutian groups, extending from Kamchatka to Alaska. But the gap between the two groups is 300 miles wide, and no traces of human occupancy have ever been found on the Commanders. Further, the ocean currents which set from Japan to the north-west coast of America may have brought occasional craft from Asia. Again to quote Holmes :

It is well known that Japanese junks have been found floating in the near Pacific, or stranded on the American shores, but this also has little bearing on the question of the peopling of America, since this continent was probably inhabited long before the Japanese junk became a sea-going vessel.

It is not beyond possibility that the inhabitants of Polynesia reached the coast of South America ; we know well that this intrepid race of seafarers accomplished the most remarkable voyages in the course of their colonisation of the Pacific Islands. The historic voyage from Rarotonga to New Zealand is a case in point. But Easter Island, the nearest of the Polynesian islands to the American coast, is well over a thousand miles distant. Moreover, it has been fairly well established that the Polynesians did not occupy the islands of the eastern Pacific until some centuries after the semi-civilizations of Central America and Peru were fully established.

So far I have made no reference to linguistics ; partly because the study of the great number of American languages is not yet complete, and partly because the linguistic argument is a very difficult one to handle fairly. It is only conclusive

when the structure of the language, its morphology, has been properly examined ; mere comparison of vocabularies is apt to be extremely misleading. Now it is a fact that all American languages yet studied are morphologically akin ; they all belong to the ' polysynthetic ' group, that is to say, languages which permit of a whole sentence being included in a single word. Macaulay attributed one of his poems to a certain Obadiah Bind-their-kings-in-chains-and-their-nobles-with-links-of-iron ; in a polysynthetic language the fictitious author's second name could be reduced to a single word and dispense with hyphens (see also page 322). Such languages are known outside America ; but the fact that they are consistent throughout America is added evidence for the homogeneity of the population.

In the absence of any written historical records (for the historical details, if any, contained in the Maya inscriptions have not yet been deciphered) we are forced to rely on the investigations made by field archaeologists interpreted in the light of what we know of the natives at the time of, and after, the Discovery. Tribal traditions, collected in post-Columbian times and reduced to writing, sometimes by natives themselves, often shed a valuable side-light on the archaeology. But such traditions tend more and more to shade into myth as the chronological records recede into antiquity.

From the economic point of view it has been found useful to classify primitive man under four main headings : collectors, hunters, **Economics of Ancient America** pastoralists and agriculturists. Pastoral life, however, played a very small part in the economics of ancient America. It was confined to the highlands of Peru and Bolivia, where herds of llama and alpaca were bred for their wool, the former also being used as a beast of burden. Elsewhere the only mammal of economic importance was the dog, used by the Eskimo and inhabitants of the great central plains for traction.

The 'fringe of the Arctic coast, from Greenland to Alaska, was occupied in quite early times by Eskimo tribes, who had developed a highly specialised culture

to meet the requirements of the unpromising environment. Such archaeological researches as have been made tend to show that this culture has remained essentially unchanged for many centuries. Winter sealing, combined with caribou and musk-ox hunting in summer, were the principal occupations. Garments were made of skin; and the textile industry was absent save for a little basket making over a very restricted area. Implements and weapons were in the main of stone or slate, though the central Eskimo obtained metallic copper, from the rich deposits on the Coppermine River, which they employed in the manufacture of fish hooks and flensing knives. A very limited amount of meteoric iron was at the disposal of a small group in Greenland.

Pottery was unknown, except as an obsolete art in the extreme east. Typical of the district are a very highly specialised form of harpoon and a stone lamp used with oil for giving light and heat. Agriculture was non-existent; but the long periods of inaction during the Arctic winter provided the Eskimo with leisure to develop the art of carving, especially in ivory, to a high degree of perfection.

South of the Eskimo and east of the Rockies is a wide region of tundra and (towards the south) sparse forest, inhabited by roving Indian tribes of the Athapaskan and Algonquian stocks, whose main support was the herds of caribou which they followed in the course of their migrations. The moose was also hunted in certain areas. Archaeological remains are scarce in this area, being confined practically to implements and arrow-heads of flaked stone, not of the finest technique, and it is

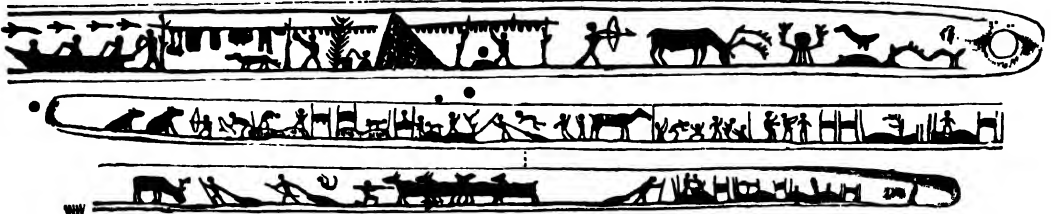
probable that this part of America has never been occupied by any save nomadic hunting peoples. Pottery, weaving, the construction of permanent dwellings and agriculture do not belong to the prehistory of this part of America.

South of this region, and extending from south-central Canada through Wyoming and North Dakota and the states immediately below

**Culture of the Buffalo area**

lie the great plains of central North America. This is the buffalo area, and again we find a series of more or less nomadic hunting tribes, Athapaskan, Algonquian, Siouan, Shoshonean and a number of others. The archaeological remains do not show a very marked differentiation from those of the preceding region, except in the presence of specialised implements, such as heavy stone hammers used for breaking the big bones of the buffalo to extract the marrow, and for pounding meat in order to produce pemmican. On the borders, however, particularly on the east and south-west, traces of greater technical development appear, including pottery.

It is believed that the buffalo area was far more restricted in early days than in historical times, but that the spread of the animal led many more sedentary tribes to take up a hunting life. This early 'back-to-the-wilds' movement was intensified by the rapid spread of the horse over the continent after the Discovery, which at first made buffalo hunting both easy and profitable, but ended in the practical extermination of the herds. In any case, the archaeology of the district seems to show that the more advanced cultures of



**SINGLE OUTLET FOR THE ARTISTIC GENIUS OF THE ESKIMO**

The whole culture of the Eskimo in the far north of the American continent is specialised to deal with their Arctic environment, and their art, like that of Palaeolithic Europe, was limited to the pictorial reproduction of daily life in a naturalistic style. The medium was usually bone or ivory, which during the long months of winter inactivity was carved into vivid scenes like those above: boats, tents, the drying of skins, and the hunting of reindeer and bear.

*From F. A. Parkyn, Prehistoric Art*

the eastern and western regions, where agriculture was practised, formerly extended across the borders of what, in historical times, was a hunters' country.

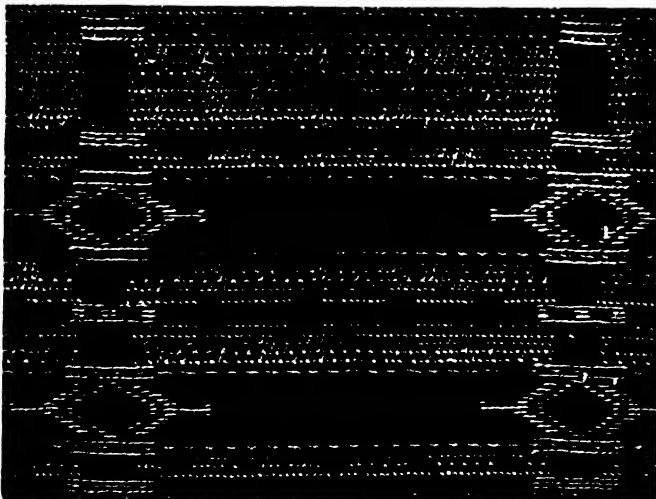
Before approaching the agricultural areas, two others demand consideration. The first of these is the strip of coast-line on the north-west of the continent, extending from Alaska, through British Columbia, into Washington and Oregon and including Queen Charlotte and Vancouver Islands. The rivers of this coast are visited yearly by mighty swarms of salmon, which were the chief mainstay of the human population of whom the Thlinkit, Haida, Tsimshian and Kwakiutl are typical. But though the salmon was the mainstay, this region provided many other resources in land and sea animals, also in vegetable products, especially edible berries. The culture built up on these foundations stood relatively high, but rather apart from the rest of America. It shows certain similarities to that of the Gilyak of Sakhalien in Asia (though far above the latter), and the 'Asiatic' type of physiognomy is more pronounced. Archaeological remains, as far as known, do not differ essentially from the equipment of the population at the Discovery, so this group may belong to a later wave

of migration. If so, it seems probable that the more advanced characters were developed after their migration.

Particular features of the local culture are the construction of large, permanent dwellings of wood, arranged in villages, which provided the winter residences of the tribes; sea-going canoes of large size, far superior to any other craft in America; exceptional skill in carving wood, and an artistic sense remarkable for the purity of its line; advanced development in basket work, leading to the construction of cloaks of cedar-bark fibre, mountain-sheep wool and mountain-goat hair, almost to be classed as weaving, but fundamentally basket work of the sort known as 'twined'; excellent stone implements, supplemented by a little copper, imported from the Arctic; and the entire absence of pottery and agriculture.

Two of these features are remarkable in so far as they are the two features which particularly distinguish the material culture of the New Zealanders from that of the rest of the Polynesians. These are the form of house and the garment produced by a basket-work technique. The two points will be discussed more fully in a later page.

Farther south, in the Columbia-Fraser region and California, were a series of tribes who may be classed as collectors. Hunting was, of course, practised, also fishing, but the mainstay of the population was the vegetable produce provided by nature in the shape of acorns, berries and nuts. To secure these the various tribes circulated in limited areas, according to the season when the natural harvests were due, returning to more or less permanent settlements with the store, which sufficed for the winter season. At the same time fish formed an important article of diet of the tribes living directly on the coast. While the historical tribes



AMERICAN FABRIC OF BASKET WORK

Akin to the Eskimo in the one fact, at least, that they were hunters and 'collectors' and had no knowledge of agriculture, were the American-Indian tribes of the north-west coast. They developed, however, amazing proficiency in basket work, even twining cloaks that rivalled the products of the loom.

British Museum

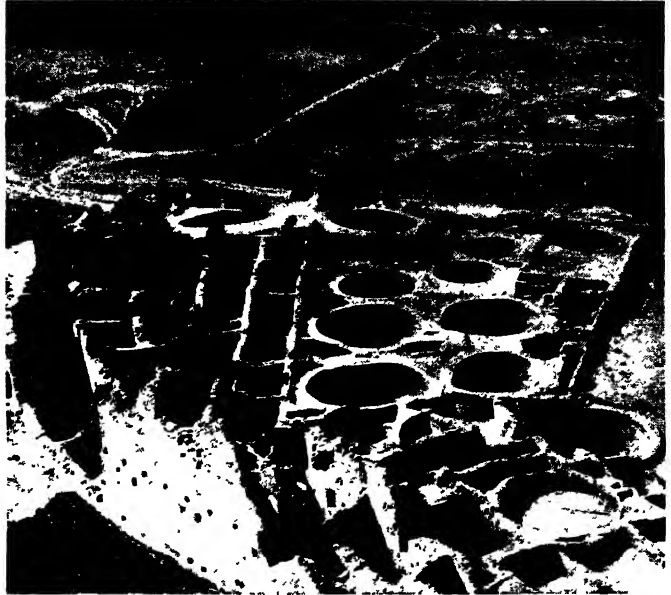


had built up a relatively high material culture on the basis of intensive 'collecting,' there is evidence, provided by the shell heaps on the coast, that a far more primitive type of 'collector' existed there in earlier times. Whether the intensive form was developed from the primitive is conjectural, but not improbable.

The material culture of this area exhibits a very advanced technique in the production of implements of flaked stone, and, especially in California, abundance of fine symmetrical mortars hewn out of the solid rock. In particular the art of basket work was carried to a degree of perfection which is unsurpassed in the world. Apart from the stone mortar, the basket was the universal utensil, being light, portable and admirably adapted to the storage of vegetable products.

So perfect a technique had been developed by the time of the Discovery that baskets were used as water vessels, and even for boiling, the water being heated by means of hot stones. Pottery and agriculture are entirely absent from this area; and though the linguistic stocks and minor variations of culture are very diversified, it presents, from the economic point of view, a more or less consistent whole. Particularly interesting, from the archaeological point of view, are the gold-bearing gravels of California, where remains of Man's handiwork have been discovered in geological strata which would suggest their great antiquity. However, none of these has stood the test of expert investigation, but may be classed as later 'intrusions.'

East of the buffalo country lies a large region comprising the eastern states and a portion of south-east Canada. It can be divided into several archaeological areas, but presents the feature that maize was cultivated throughout, though not everywhere to the same degree. The middle and lower Mississippi Valley appears to



RUINED VILLAGE OF THE PUEBLO INDIANS

Agriculture in North America was practised with greatest intensity in the southernmost states of the U.S.A., and here civilization reached its highest level. The people are known as the Pueblo Indians, from their having dwelt in villages ('pueblos')—many-storeyed complexes of sun-baked mud like Pueblo Bonita.

*Photo, Ernest Peterffy*

have been the area of most intensive agriculture, and here the archaeological remains indicate that material culture was developed on a broader basis than in any region so far considered. This is the region of great mounds and earthworks, once thought to be of enormous antiquity and the work of a vanished people. Later researches have shown that they were used as village sites up to, and even after, the Discovery, and were almost certainly constructed by the ancestors of the historical Indians, tribes of the Algonquian, Iroquoian, Siouan, Chitimacha and Caddoan stocks.

Evidence of a more advanced culture is provided by the presence of stone implements, ornaments and ceremonial objects, both chipped and polished, showing a very highly developed technique, and even by occasional sculpture. Pottery also is found in quantities, of good quality, with incised or painted ornament. Copper, too, derived from the rich metallic deposits on Lake Superior, was known and used in the manufacture of ornaments and weapons. Moreover textiles were manufactured, not on a true loom, but by means

of a suspended warp. Similar conditions seem to have extended through the upper Mississippi Valley to the area of the Great Lakes, but there is a progressive deterioration in material culture. The mounds, some of them in animal form, continue up to Wisconsin, yet there are indications that agriculture, as we go north, played a less, and hunting a more, important part in the economic life.

The culture of the Mississippi Valley grades almost imperceptibly into that of Florida and part of southern Georgia, formerly peopled by the Muskogean and Timucuan tribes. Here also stone art attained a high level, as well as pottery, though many of the curvilinear designs on the latter suggest some influence from the Antilles or Central America.

To proceed north from Georgia to the St. Lawrence, the eastern states provide

remains which indicate a less highly developed material culture than that of the Mississippi Valley. Maize cultivation was less general, and hunting and fishing played a more important part in economic life. Stone work was good, though inferior to that of the last area, and certain objects, probably of ceremonial significance, known as 'bird stones' and 'banner stones' display considerable skill in manufacture. The art of pottery was more or less rudimentary, though over part of the area weaving by means of a suspended warp was practised in some degree.

The close connexion between the development of the potter's art and intensive agriculture, which seems to be indicated in the archaeology of the eastern states, is very strongly supported by the remains discovered in the arid plateaux and canyons of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico



**MARVELLOUS CAVE HOME BUILT BY AMERICAN TROGLodyTES**

Not all the Pueblo Indians lived in the 'pueblos' that have given them their name; some of the most astonishing remains of the region are the habitations of the cliff dwellers. These made use of the sides and back walls of shallow caverns, often artificially enlarged, to aid in building adobe and masonry conglomerations of the 'pueblo' type, but preferably many feet from the ground up the face of a cliff. Such is the 'Cliff Palace,' above, of Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado.

and northern Mexico. This was the home of the so-called Pueblo Indians, living in organized settled communities and dependent principally on their maize plantations for sustenance. Here the art of building was more elaborately developed than anywhere else in the States or Canada. Caves, numerous in the rocky walls of the canyons, were modified and supplemented with masonry and 'adobe' (sun-baked clay) to provide permanent habitations. Conglomerate villages ('pueblos') were constructed of similar materials, roofed with beams, and consisted of cigar-box-like chambers plastered together like a wasp-comb and rising tier on tier, the flat roofs of the lower tiers serving as courtyards for the upper. The pueblo of Zuni exists to-day in a fair state of preservation, and is still inhabited by the descendants of the pre-historic architects.

Parallel with this development of architecture was a tremendous development in pottery. Riding across the New Mexican deserts, one frequently encounters tracts littered with pottery belonging to many periods, most of it of excellent technique. Excavation in ruined pueblos, now reduced by the lapse of time to mere mounds, has disclosed several periods of destruction and reconstruction, and at one site it has been possible to set in sequence ten different styles of pottery, extending over centuries of development.

Especially interesting is the type of the earliest ware. All American pottery was made by hand; in no place in either continent was there any knowledge of the potter's wheel, and the finest ware was produced by the 'coiling' process, similar in effect to that by which a coiled basket is made. In the earliest pottery these coils are apparent on the exterior of the pot, and serve an ornamental



#### HOW THE PUEBLO POTTERS WORKED

The Pueblo Indians excelled in pottery. It was made entirely without the potter's wheel, and to this day Pueblo women may be seen building up the pots in the old traditional manner by rolling a 'sausage' of clay, flattening it, coiling it upwards in a spiral and then smoothing the surface.

*Photo, T. A. Joyce*

purpose. In later times they were smoothed off, and the surface decorated with slips of various colours. The suggestion is that the art of pottery was derived from that of coiled basket work. Sites have been found where the stratification of remains proves that the art of basket making preceded that of pottery, and there is ample evidence that baskets were sometimes lined with clay to render them completely watertight. The decay of the basket-work exterior and the survival of the clay lining might easily introduce the idea of making vessels of clay alone.

But if pottery making did not arise locally, it can hardly have been introduced from the north. The alternative is that it was introduced from southern Mexico or Guatemala, where in ancient times the ceramic art attained an even higher level, and where maize, probably, was first cultivated. Evidence of connexion between the two areas is provided by the fact that the Pueblo Indians were accustomed to ornament certain ceremonial objects of shell and bone with a mosaic incrustation of turquoise and lignite. This art

was practised on a far larger scale in Mexico under the Aztec regime. But though there are important turquoise deposits in New Mexico there are none in southern Mexico, and it is probable that the Aztec obtained their supplies from the Pueblo area, in all likelihood by indirect trade. Another indication of southern influence in the Pueblo area is the presence of a true loom and a flourishing textile industry. From this point southwards some form of loom existed throughout Central America, and down the Southern Pacific coast to the farthest confines of the Inca Empire.

It is clear that the Pueblo culture extended into northern Mexico, at any rate as far south as the site of Casas Grandes in Chihuahua; but there is no continuous chain of culture between it and the area directly influenced by the semi-civilization of the Mexican Valley, Toltec and Aztec. For instance, in this gap there are no evidences of architectural development. Maize cultivation and the potter's art constitute the principal link, though here neither attained the development characteristic of the regions immediately north and south. In the words of Holmes :

It is assumed that this region witnessed the passage southward of the racial currents which overspread Central Mexico in pre-historic times, reaching the culmination of their advancement and power in the Valley of Mexico at the period of the Spanish invasion; but it is not likely that the scattered antiquities will ever contribute materially to the elucidation of the events which led to Aztec domination.

Now the Aztec belong to a later chapter (Chap. 132), and before considering the pre-Aztec remains of the Mexican Valley it will be best to proceed farther south and survey briefly the area of Early Maya civilization, which not only was the source of Mexican culture, but was, in itself, one of the most remarkable phases of artistic and technical development in the history of human progress amongst peoples completely ignorant of bronze and iron.

The area of Early, as distinguished from later, Maya culture forms, roughly, an inverted triangle, the base running from

the Mexican state of Chiapas eastward across Guatemala into British Honduras, and the apex extending into the Republic of Honduras in the south. At the angles of this triangle are grouped the 'cities' which show the earliest dates, the earliest of all occurring in the north-east, at Tikal and Uaxactun, in Guatemala, not far from the British Honduras frontier. With these are grouped Naranjo and Benque Viejo. Next, in point of time, is Copan, far to the south, in the Republic of Honduras, and its offshoot, Quiriguá, just within the Guatemalan boundary. In the north-west stand Piedras Negras, Palenque and Menché. Of these Piedras Negras appears to be the oldest and Menché the latest, but none of these sites shows dates as early as Copan, which, in its turn, is certainly later than Uaxactun, and probably later than Tikal. The earliest dates, therefore, occur in the north-east of the area, and this point is worthy of notice in connexion with any discussion of the origin of Maya culture.

Within this triangle have been discovered many groups of stone-built ruins, pyramidal mounds grouped about courts, often supporting temples decorated with elaborate carving or stucco work, and large sculptured monoliths and 'altars' bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Most of these monoliths are in the form of slabs or rectangular columns showing human figures, clad in elaborate costumes, carved in more or less high relief. But, during a certain period of its history, at Quiriguá (where the stela or column attained its greatest dimensions) the stela was replaced by a huge block sculptured in the shape of a grotesque monster.

Mention of these stelae introduces one of the outstanding features of Maya civilization, the invention and elaboration of a hieroglyphic script, the only instance in America. It is true that the inhabitants of the Mexican Valley and Oaxaca kept records of an advanced 'pictographic' type (see page 1064), but their culture appears to have been based on Maya inspiration. Farther north, among the Indians of the Plains and the Eskimo, the only method of recording events was the pictorial representation of scenes, painted.



**GIGANTIC MAYA 'DATE MARKER'**

The monolithic stelae of the Maya were erected to mark the passage of time, the date that each records being expressed in a series of glyphs, usually arranged in vertical columns of squares, as on this example at Quiriguá.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

on hide or carved on bone or ivory, and unaccompanied by date symbols.

Now the main content of Maya inscriptions appears to consist of elaborate date calculations, and these for the most part can be deciphered to-day. Interpretation, so far as it has proceeded, is based upon the account given by Landa, the first bishop of Yucatan, of the day and month signs in use among the Yucatec Maya at the time of the conquest, and of their numerical system. The system in use in Yucatan was simpler than that practised by the Early Maya, and obviously derived from it; and Landa's information, applied to the study of the casts and photographs obtained by Maudslay in the course of seven expeditions to Central America between 1884 and 1894, laid the foundation of the study of Maya hieroglyphs.

The Maya calendar contains two definite elements. First, a 260-day period obtained by the association of the numerals 1 to 13 with twenty day-signs; this ran in a continuous 'round.' But there was also a 365-day period, practically a solar year, divided into eighteen 'months,' each of twenty days, with a short 'month' of five days to complete the 365. A date was recorded by its day-sign with the

**DAY SIGNS**



**MONTH SIGNS**



**UAYEB**  
(5 unlucky days)

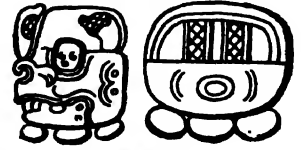
**CYCLE (144,000 Days)**



**KATUN (7,200 Days)**



**TUN (360 Days)**



**SELECTED SIGNS FROM THE COMPLICATED CALENDAR OF THE MAYA**

The original Maya time-unit was a 'month' of 20 named days running concurrently with a 'week' of 13 numbered days; these worked round to correspondence every 260 days. When the solar year was recognized it was divided into 18 named months of 20 days (=360 days, a 'tun'), with an extra month of five unlucky days. Owing to these last the 'months' worked out of step on the two systems; but a day-sign, week-numeral, month-sign and month-numeral fixed the date in a calendar-round of 52 years. The 'cycle' (144,000 days) of 20 'katuns' was for longer reckonings

*From British Museum, Guide to the Maya Sculptures*

attached numeral, together with a month-sign and a numeral showing its position in that month. But a similar combination of these four elements would reoccur every 52 years, and the early Maya provided against any mistake by prefacing any important date-record with a series of numerical glyphs expressing the distance of that particular date from one day in the remote past which was evidently the starting point of their calendar.

A study of the inscriptions on the stelae at various sites shows that the early Maya were in the habit of erecting one of these monuments every

**Date of the** twenty years (to be quite  
**Maya cities** exact, every  $20 \times 360$  days). A comparison of the dates, therefore, gives us an indication of the length of occupation of each site, together with some idea of its relative antiquity. But the correlation with European chronology is still a matter of considerable doubt, owing to the lack of continuity of record between the Early Maya and the later Maya of Yucatan and elsewhere who came in contact with the Spaniards. Bishop Landa, to whom we are indebted for an account of Yucatec chronology, burned every Maya manuscript that he could lay hands on; with the result that only three (one in two halves which are known by different names) survive, and only one of these is in Early Maya style. Certain native chronicles were written down in post-Conquest times, notably the Books of Chilán Balam of the Yucatec, the Popol Vuh of the Quiché, inhabiting the highlands of Guatemala, and the Chronicles of their neighbours, the Kakchiquel. But it is not easy to relate these with the Early Maya period.

There have been several attempts at correlating Early Maya chronology with our own. The theory which finds acceptance at the moment in England would place the earliest dated stela somewhere in the third century B.C.; while American archaeologists favour a dating some 300 years later. The difference is not great in the time-schedule of human progress, and there is every probability that further researches may settle the question.

But the presence of dated monuments in the early Maya area proves that this

region was inhabited by a people of relatively high culture for some 500 years, during which period art and architecture, pottery and weaving, maintained an extraordinarily high level of excellence. Then, suddenly, silence. A period of comparatively few years covers the final dates at the most important sites, and it would appear that the whole population, or at any rate the main bulk of it, left the region and migrated north to Yutatan, where they founded the so-called Late Maya Empire.

The connexion between the two periods, apart from obvious artistic and technological similarities, is proved by a few monuments, dated according to the early system, within the boundaries of Yucatan. Two similar monuments have been found far to the west, on the boundary of Oaxaca, proving that at any rate a section of the population took this route when the old centres of civilization were abandoned. The cause, or causes, of this wholesale desertion of age-long settlements remains a mystery, but it is quite certain that these wonderful stone-built sites had long been uninhabited and swallowed up by the encroaching jungle when Cortés passed through the country.

This is one of the mysteries which are attached to Early Maya civilization. A second, even greater, concerns its origin; because even the monuments bearing the earliest dates exhibit a skill in workmanship, a conventionalised art and a highly developed symbolism, which imply a long period of development. Moreover, the day which forms the starting point of Early Maya chronology is some 3,000 years earlier than the earliest dated monument. Early Maya civilization, therefore, as far as revealed to us at present, appears, in its earliest dated phase, in full flower, a sort of Minerva springing in panoply from the head of Jove, and perishing with equal suddenness.

• But before considering origins, a short survey of that civilization, so far as it can be reconstructed, is necessary. To leave aside for one moment the question of art, the most spectacular remains of the early Maya period are architectural. At this period metals were practically

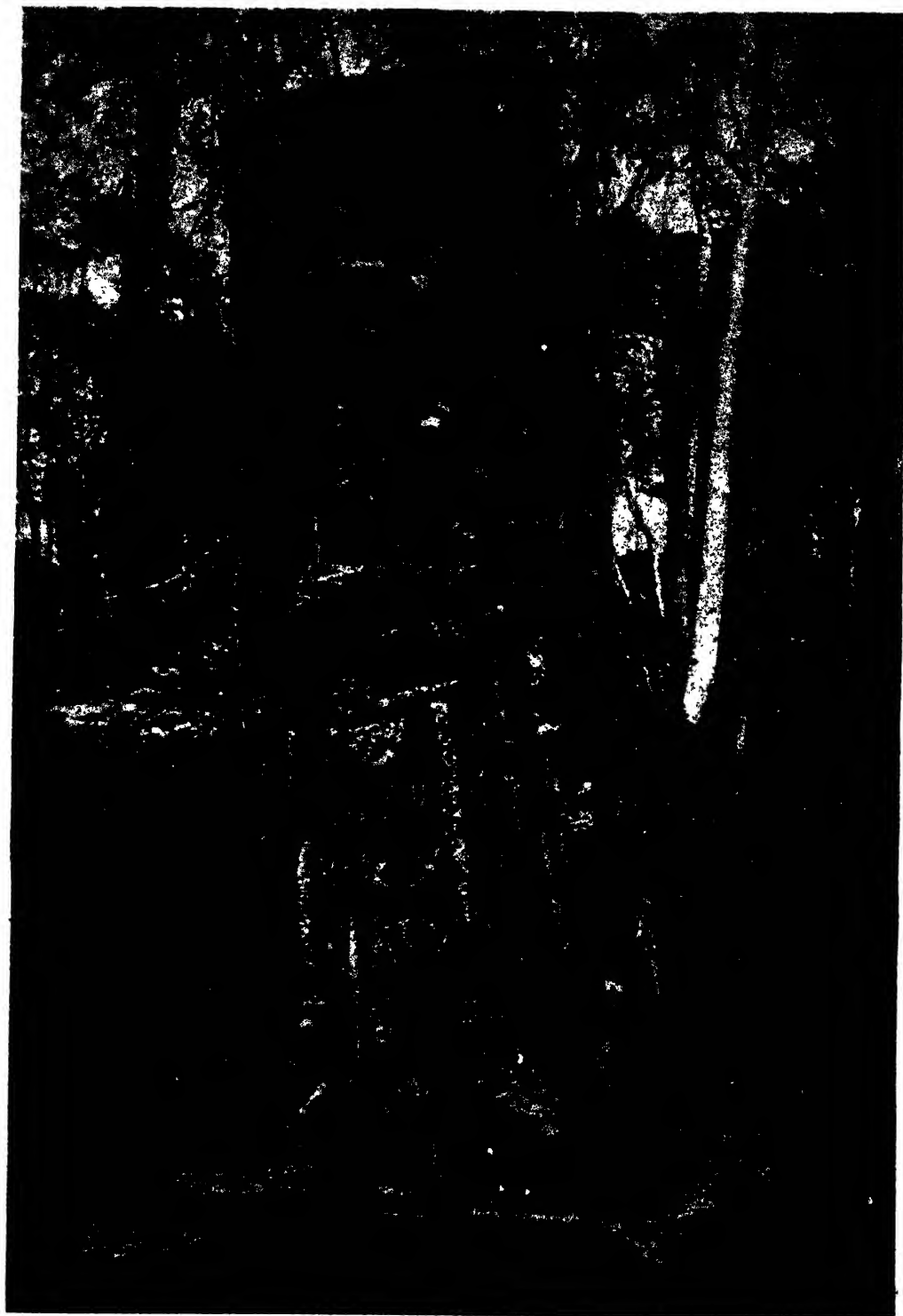


**MAYA TEMPLE CROWNING A STEPPED PYRAMID**

The so-called 'pyramids' of the Maya age in no sense comparable with the Egyptian, for they were not tombs but were intended to lift a temple into a lofty and conspicuous position. Moreover, they were usually stepped. This fine but forest-grown specimen is at Tikal in Guatemala.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

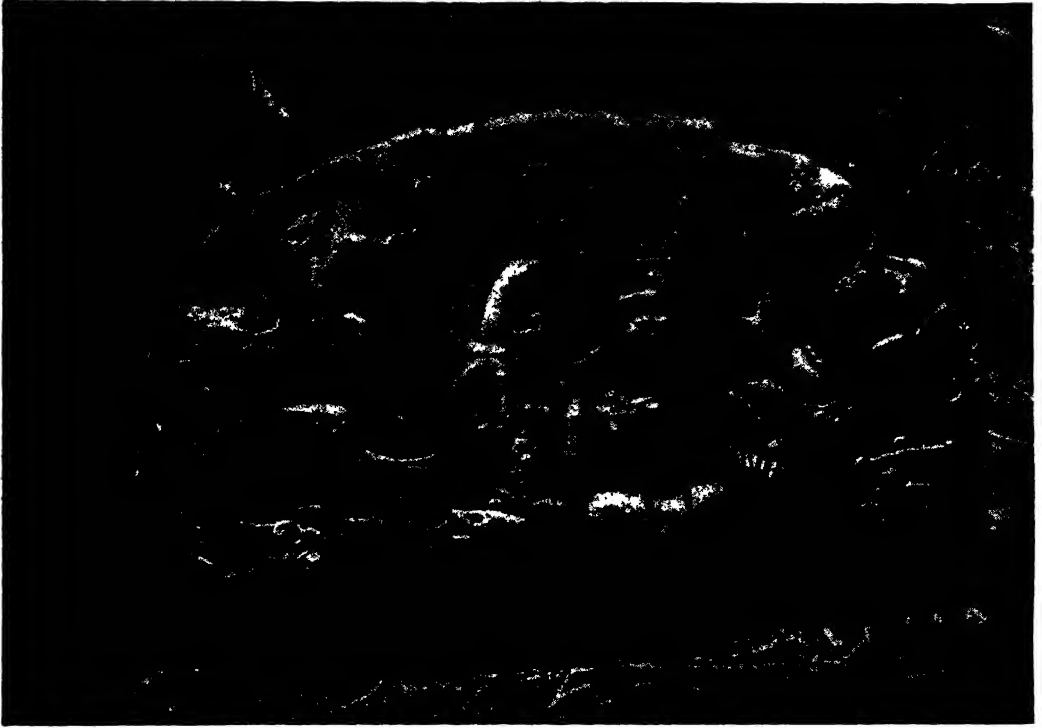




**INTRICATELY CARVED MONOLITH RECORDING A MAYA DATE**

At Copan, just over the border in Honduras, stands this magnificently carved 'date-marker' (see page 2575). The figure, of a priest with head-dress, is essentially a relief standing out from a square pillar, but so deep is the carving that it is almost detached and merits the name of statue.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslayi*



The beast that suggested the earth monster to the Maya seems to have been the alligator. In the jaws of its front head—the one seen in both the specimens here—is the head or seated figure of the sun god, while the other has the skeleton jaw of the death god with other attributes of the sun god.

*Photo, Col. F. H. Ward*



#### **EARTH MONSTERS THAT CROUCH IN THE FORESTS OF GUATEMALA**

For a certain period at Quiriguá the normal columnar date-markers for the 'katun' periods were replaced by great sculptured blocks known as 'earth monsters.' They have a head at either end, and probably symbolised the earth which yields up the sun at dawn and swallows him again at night.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslayi*



At Nasca the earliest potters ('proto-Nasca') concentrated on colour and painted decoration—bird, mice and a human figure in shades of red, brown, black, yellow, white and mauve are here seen. Further, the water bottle, instead of loop-and-spout, has two spouts connected by a solid bar.



#### CARICATURE AND PAINTING ON THE HAND-MADE POTTERY OF PERU

On the stoneless Peruvian coast outlet for art was found in pottery. Two centres, Truxillo and Nasca, flourished; the earliest pottery of the former ('proto-Chimu') excelled in form and was marked by a water bottle with narrow looped spout to check evaporation and facilitate carriage and pouring.

*British Museum*

unknown. Only one gold object has been found in connexion with an early Maya site, and copper is almost equally rare. The stone-built 'cities' of this period were built of blocks quarried and carved by means of stone implements, which have been found in great numbers within the area. The Maya were indefatigable builders, and most of the greater sites show evidence of constant reconstruction. The masses of masonry which they erected merely with the aid of stone tools and human traction represent one of the great architectural efforts of mankind living under primitive conditions, only equalled (and in some respects surpassed) by the early inhabitants of Peru and Bolivia.

Apart from the terracing of hillsides, probably for the purpose of cultivation, Maya building falls under three headings: monoliths, 'pyramids' and 'temples.' Allusion has already been made to the monoliths — stelae and altars — which constitute so striking a feature of most Early Maya sites.

**Purpose of the Maya Pyramids** The pyramids were invariably of the 'stepped' variety and flat-topped, differing in the latter respect from the typical Egyptian pyramid. They served a different purpose. The Egyptian pyramid was a tomb: the Maya pyramid was essentially a platform on which to erect a temple or an altar. Maya religion was closely connected with astronomy, and the movements of the sun, moon and certain planets were carefully observed. It is probable, therefore, that the temples, erected on their lofty substructures, were also observatories.

The buildings themselves, temples and ceremonial chambers, show that the Maya architect was ignorant of three very important principles, the use of mortar, the bonding of corners and the true arch. It is a little surprising that the use of mortar had not been discovered, because stucco was used freely as a coating for



#### MAYA METHOD OF THE FALSE ARCH

A half-ruined building at Chichén Itzá well shows the Maya principle of the false arch. At a certain point the facing courses begin to incline inwards, each course overlapping the last, until the gap can be bridged with a single slab, stability being given by the immense weight of superimposed masonry.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

masonry, and at some sites for moulded decoration. But the fact that it was not known and that the corners of buildings were not bonded has contributed seriously to the decay of the early structures. Vegetation, driving its roots between the uncemented blocks, has burst asunder many of the finest buildings.

For roofing the early architect employed, in the main, the false arch and (but only occasionally) beams which formed a support for stucco. Both methods impose a severe limit upon the width of a building without placing any restrictions on its length. The false arch, characteristic of Maya architecture as a whole, was constructed as follows. When the walls of a chamber had reached the desired height, the mason commenced building inward, by means of overlapping courses, until the gap could be bridged by a single stone. A heavy layer of masonry was added, and at some sites, such as Tikal and Palenque, a lofty roof crest, in order that the superimposed weight should keep the arch firm. This method of construction has several defects. The walls must be built very thick in order to withstand the outward thrust of the arch, and the room space is proportionately very small as compared with the mass of masonry which surrounds it.



**ROOF COMB ON A MAYA TEMPLE**

One result of the false arch, which had to rise steeply in order to stand, was a very spacious pent or entablature for decoration in stone or stucco. This was often further enhanced by a roof comb, whose primary object was no doubt to provide extra weight; as in this temple at Palenque.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

At the same time, since the false arch can only spring at a very obtuse angle from the wall, a correspondingly lofty entablature results on the exterior of the building. This entablature, so characteristic of all Maya buildings, together with the roof crest, provided a splendid space for mural decoration, of which the architect took full advantage. In some cases this decoration was sculptured. In others, as at Palenque, it was modelled in stucco. Or again it might be a mosaic of carved blocks, as at the late Yucatec sites of Chichén Itzá and Uxmal.

A study of the buildings at different sites shows that architecture developed considerably even under the restrictions imposed by the methods employed. The heavy, cave-like structures of Tikal, with

tall, solid roof crests, are imposing in their mere mass. But the buildings at Palenque, with their thinner walls, broken by additional entrances, and their openwork roof crests, are far more gracious. This attempt at 'lightening' the inevitable solidity of Maya buildings shows further development in the 'New Empire' sites of Yucatan; but here it is usually accompanied by a superabundance of decorative detail.

Unfortunately the use of wooden lintels for doorways has contributed seriously to the collapse of Maya buildings; the decay of the wood has left the heavy entablature without support, and the result has been collapse. Yet stone lintels were used at some sites, and those at Menché, carved in relief, provide some of the finest examples of early Maya sculpture.

Starting, then, with a rectangular, cigar-box-like structure with a single doorway, the Maya eventually developed complicated edifices with side corridors, many entrances and sometimes an inner shrine.

The multiplication of doorways appears to have led to the invention of the column, which is, in Early Maya times, simply a section of wall between entrances. True columns, in caryatid or serpent form, belong to the later Maya period, when the old culture had been affected by influences emanating from the Valley of Mexico. The plain column is found at the remarkable site of Mitla in Oaxaca, in the territory of the Zapotec people. The Zapotec appear to have been permeated by Maya influences, but they were no slavish imitators. The ruins at Mitla, with their elaborate sculptured designs borrowed from textile art, are some of the most remarkable in America.

Apart from the stelae and altars, the Maya mason usually dealt with relatively small blocks of stone; and nothing like

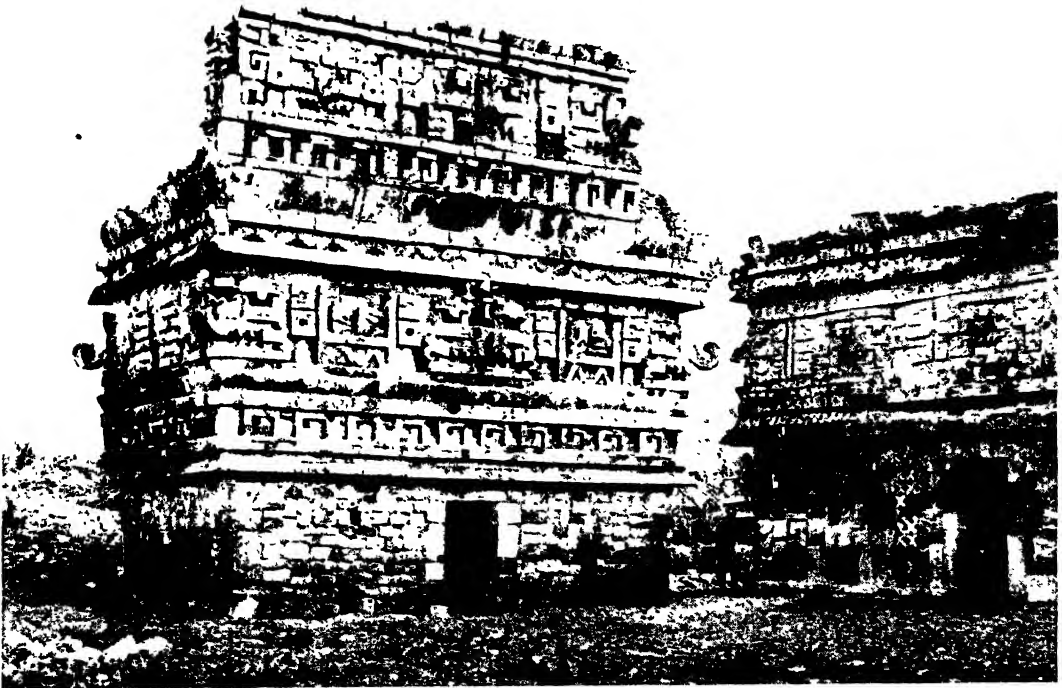
the megalithic masonry of prehistoric Peru is found in the region. The nearest approach to megalithic building yet discovered is the series of terraces which face the hill spur on which the ruins of Lubaantun,\* in British Honduras, were constructed; but even these cannot compare with the structures erected in Peru and Bolivia in pre-Inca times.

The Maya as builders were indefatigable and never content. Excavation has proved that pyramids were frequently enlarged by the addition of one or more masonry 'skins'; that buildings were filled solid with rubble and used as foundation mounds for another building; and that whole series of hill terraces were submerged in the course of later architectural developments.

The exact significance of these great architectural complexes, belonging to the Early Maya period, now hidden in dense bush, has been the subject of much discussion. It is clear that they were not fortresses, because they are obviously not

arranged for defence. It is equally clear that they could not have accommodated the population necessary for their construction. It seems probable that they were ceremonial centres, whither the surrounding inhabitants repaired for the performance of religious rites, inhabited only by chiefs and priests. The existence of these sites implies not only a large population but a strong central control. We know that the Maya of Yucatan in historical times were ruled by hereditary chiefs and a strong official class, and that their lives were directed by religion. The highly symbolic and ceremonial nature of Maya architectural ornament supports the theory that architecture was the handmaid of religion.

Maya art, as shown in the sculptures, suffers somewhat from an excess of symbolism. There is a tendency to overcrowding of detail, each detail being suggestive of some attribute or quality. This feature, which characterises even the earlier monuments, implies a long process



MOSAIC OF CARVED BLOCKS IN LATE MAYA ARCHITECTURE

The decorations lavished on the tall entablature of Maya buildings might be sculptured reliefs or moulded stucco. The latter was often employed (it is seen on the temple at Palenque opposite), which is strange, since its knowledge never led to the use of mortar for building. In the Late Maya sites of Yucatan we find an elaborate mosaic of sculptured blocks, as on this temple at Chichén Itzá.

• Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay



**MASSIVE COLUMNS OF A HALL AT MITLA**

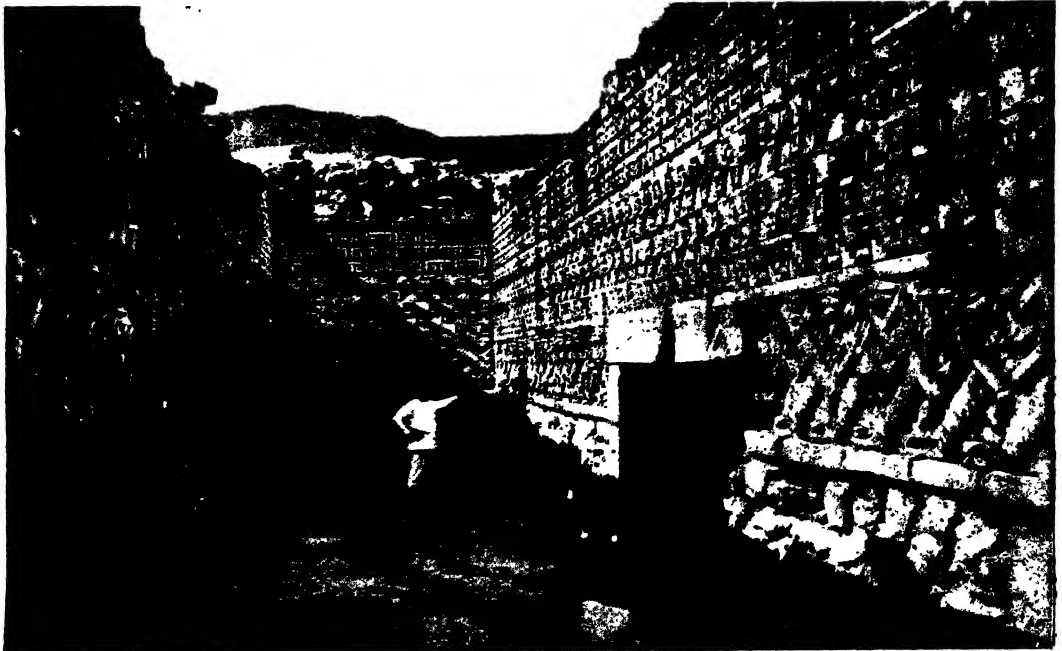
True columns are rare in Early Maya buildings, the nearest approach being square sections of wall left between adjacent doorways. In the Late Maya buildings of Yucatan these developed into true columns in snake or caryatid form but the most perfect examples are at Mitla, a site of the Zapotec folk.

of development, and adds to the mystery which surrounds Maya origins. But it is wonderful how the Maya sculptor mastered

his detail. It is impossible not to be impressed by the calm serenity of the stelae of Copan or the reliefs of Palenque and Menché; even the superabundance of subsidiary ornament never degenerates into 'fussiness,' and the result, though strange, is always impressive.

Maya sculpture on a large scale was essentially sculpture in relief, and only in exceptional cases attained the full round. The stelae, as remarked above, generally portray a human figure, and the stelae at Copan, when arranged in order of date, show the figure gradually emerging from the block, but never becoming detached from it. Yet in relief sculpture the Maya progressed farther than any other people living under similar stone-age conditions. Not only could

ture the Maya progressed farther than any other people living under similar stone-age conditions. Not only could



**MOSAICS OF AMAZING INTRICACY EVOLVED BY THE ZAPOTEC INDIANS**

Mitla (its Mexican name) lies in Oaxaca province, on the south coast of Mexico facing the Pacific. It seems to have been the religious centre of the Zapotec, for Lyobaa (its native name) means 'place of the dead'; and, though Maya influence was strong, distinct native tendencies in the ornamenting of its buildings are apparent. Especially striking are the mazy geometrical mosaics, copied from textiles, of this hall at Mitla in the same building as the Hall of the Columns (top).

*Photo, C. B. Waite*



they portray a perfect profile, a feat never achieved by the Egyptians or Assyrians, but even a three-quarter view in true perspective. In this respect the slabs from the inner sanctuaries of the shrines at Palenque constitute veritable masterpieces of primitive sculpture.

The Maya artist produced his effect by a certain purity of line which has hardly been surpassed, but his art is unemotional, and invested with an almost superhuman repose. It is therefore in every sense monumental.

Sculpture in the round on a life-sized scale is, as remarked above, exceptional, and the finest example comes from Copan. Smaller carvings are not so uncommon, such as figurines and masks, cut from various hard stones; as well as jadeite plaques with well proportioned designs in low relief. Whence came this jadeite is another mystery. It cannot have been common, and the supply appears to have become exhausted in comparatively early times. Jadeite plaques, carved in the Early Maya style, have been recovered from the sacred well at the Late Maya site of Chichén Itzá, but these were probably heirlooms, dating from an earlier period and handed down from generation to generation.



GLIMPSE OF MAYA SOCIAL LIFE

Maya art was strictly religious, symbolic and ceremonial, and we may infer that social life was also regulated by ceremony and strong central control. This relief from Menché shows a retainer making obeisance before his chief.

Cast in British Museum



HILLSIDE LABORIOUSLY TERRACED

Though the usual Maya building material was fairly small squared blocks, sometimes with rubble filling, the terraced hillsides at Lubaantun in British Honduras show a style of construction that approaches the megalithic work of Peru.

Photo, T. A. Joyce

Whether the Early Maya worked metal is still a matter of uncertainty. One single gold ornament has been discovered at Palenque, but it may be a later intrusion; and no copper object has yet been found which can undoubtedly be referred to the Early Empire. However, both gold and copper were worked by the later Maya of Yucatan, though they were employed chiefly for ornamental purposes. On the other hand the working of stone implements by flaking and polishing was carried to a very high degree of perfection, and the spear and knife blades of various kinds of chert, chalcedony and obsidian (volcanic glass) can be equalled only by the finest productions of Egypt, Denmark and Chile.

The monuments afford abundant evidence that the Early Maya were skilled weavers, though no single piece of textile has survived. It is clear that they wove



#### GORGEOUS HEAD-DRESS AS A MARK OF RANK

Relief from Palenque showing some dignitary seated on a jaguar throne; he is receiving a head-dress apparently composed of feather and mosaic work, with an animal head snouted like the rain god in front. Complicated head-dresses constantly figure in Maya art, while feathers are its favourite decorative motif.

*Cast in British Museum*

garments with elaborate patterns, embroidered borders and tasselled fringes.

But though material evidence of their skill as weavers is lacking, there is abundant proof of their mastery of the art of pottery. Vases, bowls, beakers and tripod vessels, excellently modelled and painted in fine designs in rich colours, bear witness to a high development of the ceramic art. The use of moulds was known, but here too, as throughout the whole of America, the principle of the potter's wheel was undiscovered, and the craftsman fashioned his finely proportioned vessels entirely by hand. The absence of the potter's wheel from the technical outfit of the American craftsman has a significance to which reference will be made later.

The beliefs and religious tendencies of the Early Maya can at present only be

guessed; but, fortunately, material for a reconstruction of their theology is not lacking. The principal sources are the account given by Bishop Landa of the Maya of Yucatan shortly after the Discovery, and the numerous descriptions of Mexican ritual and mythology which, to anticipate, were based to a great extent on Maya culture.

The deity who appears most frequently in early Maya art is the rain god, who is shown with a trunk-like nose borrowed from the tapir, which was regarded as the lightning animal. Rain in the tropics is associated with thunder and lightning, and to an agricultural people like the Maya, rain is of the utmost importance. A maize god appears, too, but a passive rather than an active divinity; also a deity associated with the planet Venus; a sun god, who appears to have played a rather subordinate rôle; and a death god whose importance may be judged from the number of times he is portrayed in sculpture and in

the manuscripts.

Though the rain god seems to have held the chief place in popular worship, there were two high gods known, at any rate in Late Maya times, as Kukulcan and Itzamna, who stood as titular heads of the pantheon. Both were creator gods, but they played very different parts. Itzamna was a sky god, a sort of Jupiter, aloof and mysterious and not to be invoked on small occasions. Kukulcan was the culture hero, inventor of the calendar and of arts and crafts, the god, moreover, who presided over that mysterious thing 'life.' His name is compounded of two words, 'kukul,' meaning the 'quetzal' bird (the shy resplendent trogon which inhabits the Guatemalan bush), and 'kan,' meaning snake.

The key to the meaning of this queer combination of bird and reptile is

provided by the Popol Vuh, the 'Sacred Book' of the Quiché people of western Guatemala, where this deity is described as 'the feathered snake which moves in the waters.' This obviously means the ripple, born of wind and water, and having as its esoteric significance the combination of breath and movement, that is, life. This god was par excellence the god of the Maya, but, at any rate in early times, he was too holy and mysterious

to be portrayed in human form. Like the Buddha before the eastern campaign of Alexander, he is portrayed by a symbol, in this case by a bird with serpent attributes, or a snake with feathers.

Early Maya ritual appears to have been of a mild character, and the tribute paid to the gods consisted of agricultural produce, and birds and animals, offered in sacrifice. Human victims were certainly provided in later times, but the



ACCOMPLISHED TECHNIQUE OF THE MAYA RELIEF SCULPTOR

The 'Temple of the Sun' at Palenque possesses some of the finest Maya reliefs. The art may seem barbaric at a casual glance, but sympathetic study will show its qualities. Here a shield bearing the face of the sun god hangs from crossed spears supported by crouching figures in three-quarter profile—a difficult effect for relief. On either side priests make offerings, the one on the right being an exquisite example of line work. Notice, too, that the eyes are in accurate profile.

Cast in British Museum



**STATUE OF THE MAIZE GOD**

Relief was the essence of Maya art. Sometimes the figure is almost detached from the parent block, as in page 2578, but statues completely in the round, like this limestone figure of the maize god from Copan, are rare.

*British Museum*

evidence of the monuments would seem to show that human sacrifice in the Early Maya period, if it existed at all, was very exceptional. The nearest approach appears to have been the blood offering made by worshippers from their own bodies, by piercing their tongues or ears.

As regards the domestic economy of the Maya, we know that they were a sedentary people (apart from their great migration to Yucatan), who practised hunting and fowling and, to some extent, bee-keeping. But their mainstay was agriculture, and the plant of paramount importance was maize.

Now the origin of maize is rather obscure; it is not known in a wild state, and the original plant from which it must have been derived by intensive

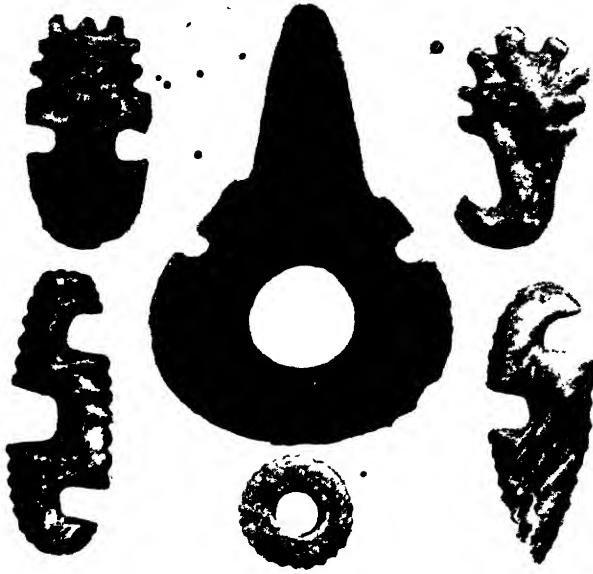
cultivation has not been identified with certainty. Its nearest relation is the so-called 'teosinte' (*Euchlaena mexicana*) indigenous to the plateau country of Mexico and Guatemala, and the teosinte is the only plant with which it can be crossed. It may be that the teosinte is actually the wild parent of maize, or the two may be descended from a common ancestor at present unidentified. But, in either case, the development of the maize plant in its numerous varieties implies many centuries of settled life.

The fact, now accepted, that no grain of maize reached the Old World before the time of Columbus, and that no grain of rice had then passed from the Old World to the New, carries with it a strong implication that the early semi-civilizations of America were indigenous and not inspired by Old World culture influences. To this point recurrence will be made later. For the moment attention need only be called to the fact that in pre-historic America the level of material culture varied directly with the intensity of maize cultivation. In fact aboriginal American civilization was based upon the maize plant.

It is clear that Early Maya influences spread west, north and south, long before the collapse of the Old Empire. In the north settlements were founded in Yucatan, the nucleus of the New Empire. So much of the Republic of Honduras is archaeologically unexplored that the extent of Maya influence in this direction cannot yet be estimated; but it is not unlikely that certain monuments as far south as Nicaragua drew their inspiration from Maya sources. In the west it is clear that this inspiration reached out to the Mexican province of Oaxaca, inhabited by the people known as Zapotec, and crept thence to the Valley of Mexico, which was later the centre of Aztec power.

The archaeology of the Mexican Valley, as revealed by excavations conducted at more than one site, exhibits at least three main periods. The earliest is usually termed 'archaic,' and is characterised by a peculiar type of pottery figurines and rather coarse clay vessels. It is clear that

**Spread of Maya influence**



**HARD STONES ELABORATELY FLAKED**

The civilization of the Maya, and indeed of the whole American Continent, was fundamentally Stone Age, in spite of some knowledge of metals used principally for ornament. Great proficiency in the flaking of hard stones was attained, as shown by these probably ritual objects of chert from British Honduras.

*British Museum*

this period was of long duration, and the area over which remains of this type are found is very wide, extending from Guatemala to the Panuco Valley in Mexico. Superimposed on this are remains of figurines and pottery of far higher technical and artistic standard. The period represented by these (which was considerably shorter than the 'archaic') is known as the 'Toltec' period. Later still are the remains characteristic of the Aztec (see Chapter 132).

Now the Mexican Valley appears to have been the place where Maya culture, filtered through the Zapotec people of Oaxaca, met a stream of migrating tribes (speaking a common tongue, Nahuatl) who poured down from the north in a succession of waves. These tribes were essentially nomadic

hunters, worshipping gods (whom they regarded as their personal leaders) connected with the sky and stars. The first of these waves, the Toltec, settling in the Mexican Valley, adopted and developed the branch of Maya culture which they found there, including many of the Maya gods.

The adoption of the gods was necessary. Their own gods, being connected only with hunting and war, knew nothing of agriculture and technical processes such as weaving and architecture. In particular they paid reverence to Kukulcan, whose name they translated literally into their language as Quetzalcoatl. To him they attributed the invention of all the arts and crafts which they, as hunters, did not possess. This and the further fact that the worship of this deity

was never, even in Aztec times, associated with human sacrifice, is in itself an indication that later Mexican culture was based on Maya inspiration.

Building in stone flourished under the Toltec regime, and the two great pyramids of the Sun and Moon (so-called) at the



**JADEITE FOR RITUAL AND ADORNMENT**

A love of colour seems to have characterised most American civilisations; it was manifested in flowers, feathers, bright stones and beautifully painted pottery. The ritual mask on the left and the plaque carved with a relief figure, both from Copan, are made of jadeite, a green stone; turquoise and lignite were also prized.

*British Museum and Gann Collection*



#### TAPIR-SNOOUTED RAIN GOD

Owing to his importance for the maize crops the rain god was one of the chief Maya divinities. He is portrayed with the snout of the tapir, the 'lightning animal,' as in this series on a temple at Uxmal in Yucatan.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

great site of San Juan Teotihuacan near Mexico City are, with the pyramid of Cholula, the loftiest in Central America. One of the smaller pyramids at the former site reveals sculptural decoration admirably conceived and executed. The Maya inspiration is obvious, but the Toltec, in

adopting Maya motives, conventionalised them. They replaced art by decoration. But they invented the caryatid pillar and a new form of pottery technique, a kind of slip inlay.

Further immigration from the north, culminating in the arrival of the Aztec and the gradual introduction of fierce forms of worship, including human sacrifice, led to the disruption of the Toltec rule. Meanwhile, Toltec influence had spread to the Totonac peoples of Vera Cruz and down into Yucatan, where the later buildings of Chichén Itzá are in Toltec style. Wholesale migration of Toltec clans, mostly in an easterly and southerly direction, took place at the downfall of the Toltec regime, and reinforced the influence which had previously made itself felt in those quarters.

As implied above, the southerly extension of the great Maya culture is uncertain. Copan, just within the border of the Republic of Honduras, is the most southerly of Early Maya 'cities' yet discovered. Salvador shows only a reflection of late Maya art. In Nicaragua Maya influence is possible, but no trace of the Maya script has been found, and Costa Rica, while providing, locally, abundant evidence of Aztec influence, is in certain respects connected archaeologically with the southern continent.



#### SKILFUL EXAMPLES OF EARLY MAYA WORK IN POTTERY

Though made without the potter's wheel—which was entirely unknown from end to end of America—Maya pottery approached in shape and colour, without equalling, the exquisite wares of South America. The tripod bowl on the left, from British Honduras, shows the potter's command over form; the next two, also from British Honduras, are fantastic rather than beautiful, but the last, from Guatemala, seems to contain the germs of portraiture. All are in the Early Maya style.

*Photo, 'The Studio'; Musée du Cinquenaire, Brussels; and Fenton Collection*





#### GRIM AND FLESHLESS HEAD OF THE MAYA GOD OF DEATH

The death god was another object of worship. He is shown as a skeleton in the manuscripts, and his face, fleshless, or at least with fleshless lower jaw, appears often on the monuments. One of the two heads of the 'earth monsters' (page 2579) is that of the death god; and a remarkably grim and vigorous portrayal is that on an altar at Copan, above.

*British Museum*

To pass, then, to South America. The area which shows the earliest developed culture is that which comprises the highlands of Peru and Bolivia and the narrow strip of coast to the west. At the time of the conquest by Pizarro the whole of this region had fallen under the domination of the Inca; but the Inca, like the Aztec, built their empire on the ruins of an earlier civilization. The reconstruction of this early culture is more difficult than that of the Maya for several reasons. In the first place no form of script existed in South America, and therefore we have no means of dating monuments such as the calendrical inscriptions of the Maya. Inca traditions begin with their own history, and this does not take us back farther than the end of the eleventh century A.D.

Consequently it is only careful excavation which can shed a light upon those earlier periods concerning which tradition is almost entirely lacking. Much digging has been done in Peru and Bolivia, but little of it on scientific lines. Still, there is sufficient evidence to enable us to distinguish three great culture centres, more or less contemporary, which appear to have flourished at about the same period as the earliest dated monuments of the Maya. Two of these lay on the Peruvian coast, and the third in the uplands of Bolivia, extending into Peru.

The geographical conditions are peculiar. From the hot, waterless region of the coast, where rain is a rare phenomenon, the Andes rise abruptly, enclosing many

fertile valleys and, at their greatest elevation, arid plains surrounded by snow-capped peaks. The coast peoples lived to a large extent upon fish, but they

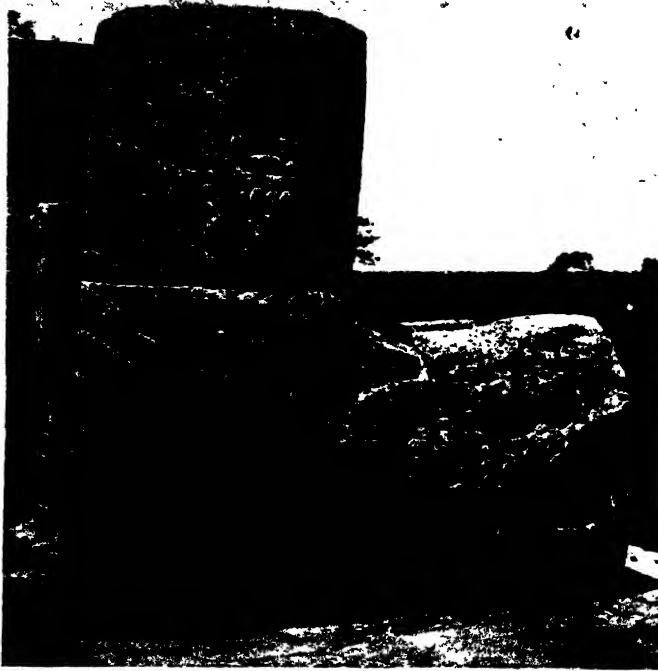


#### PRIEST BEFORE THE SKY GOD

The snake played an important part in Maya symbolism. One god, Kukulcan, was portrayed as a blend of snake and bird; and in this relief from Menché the earth monster, with the sky god emerging armed from his jaws, is shown in snake form.

*British Museum*





#### KUKULKAN SUPPORTS A MAYA SHRINE

When the pier between doorways became a genuine pillar in the late Maya area (Yucatán), it sometimes, under Toltec influence, took a caryatid form. One temple at Chichén Itzá has the feathered snake for columns; and the moulding on them does seem to suggest the 'ripple on the water,' symbol of Kukulcan.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

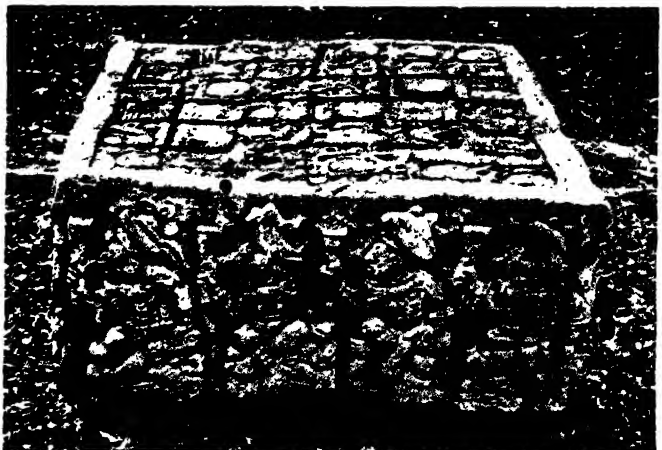
also cultivated maize, bringing water for irrigation purposes for many miles from the mountains by means of stone-built aqueducts. Maize cultivation flourished in the intermediate area, but its place on the high plateaux was taken by the 'quinoa,' a variety of buckwheat, and the potato.

One distinctive feature characterises this early culture, namely pastoral life, the only example in America. There exists in the southern continent a quadruped, distantly related to the camel, of which there are four varieties, the huanaco, the vicuña, the llama and the alpaca. Of these the first two are wild animals, but the others have never been known in the wild state and must

have been produced by intensive breeding. The alpaca was reared for its fleece, but the llama was used also as a beast of burden. Though belonging properly to the uplands, the llama had been introduced on the coast at an early period, as proved by many representations on the pottery of that region. The evolution of two domestic varieties from a wild species suggests great antiquity for South American civilization.

The three early culture centres were situated apparently at Tiahuanaco (at the southern end of Lake Titicaca, 13,000 feet above sea-level); in the region of the modern Truxillo on the coast in northern Peru; and at Nasca in the province of Yca in southern Peru. Each shows individual characters in its art and archaeological remains, and in both respects the early Nasca culture seems to stand midway between the two others.

The architectural remains at Tiahuanaco are constructed in the megalithic style, a



#### MAYA ALTAR AT COPAN

The Maya gods demanded sacrifice, as one may realize from this elaborately carved altar at Copan. But everything goes to show that flowers and fruit and the smaller animals were acceptable offerings, and that until the very latest times human sacrifice was unknown; blood-letting was an adequate substitute.

*Photo, Dr. A. P. Maudslay*

great enclosure of monoliths approached by a stairway and including a monolithic gateway, known as the 'Puerta del Sol,' which is one of the most celebrated monuments in America. The neighbourhood is strewn with great blocks of stone, some of them weighing many hundred-weight, carved with great precision and obviously the remains of some complicated architectural whole. From Tiahuanaco in Bolivia this megalithic building extends through the highlands of Peru northward, and magnificent examples may be seen in the streets of modern Cuzco and at the great fortress of Ollantaitambo, serving, in many cases, as foundations for the buildings of the Inca period which are constructed of far smaller and more regular blocks.

This pre-Inca masonry, apart from the size of the blocks, is almost unique in that the stones are polygonal and often carved with re-entrant angles. Each stone was cut to fit its immediate neighbours, and the process implies an almost superhuman labour. One of the finest examples is the Sacsahuayman fortress outside the city of Cuzco. Built without mortar, and relying simply on mass and precision of fitting, these constructions are the most enduring remains of ancient American civilization. And though they lack the decorative effect of Maya buildings, they bear witness to a superior skill in masonry.

Metal, both gold and copper (the latter often a form of bronze), was known and worked to a far greater extent than among the Maya, but it is probable that the huge blocks of which this early masonry was composed were dressed with stone tools.

Colossal stone figures in human form, covered with intricate designs, have been found at Tiahuanaco; and this introduces

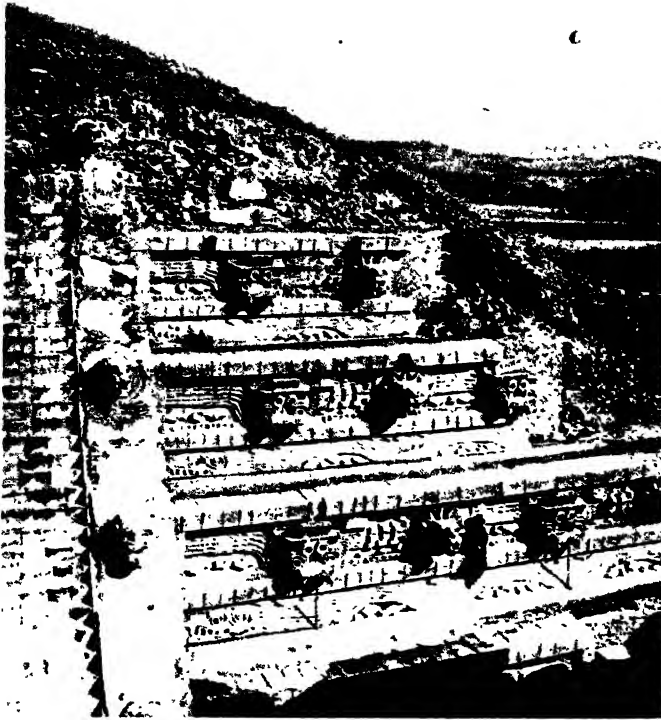


#### BLOOD-LETTING TO APPEASE A GOD

Blood-offering to the Maya god was made by piercing tongue or ears; this priest, kneeling before a divinity bearing a staff of power, is taking the heroic course of drawing through his tongue a rope studded with thorns. At his feet is a basket containing apparatus for ear-piercing. From Menché.

*British Museum*

the subject of art. The decorative art of this period was in the main angular, but well proportioned and extremely impressive. It is far more economical of detail and more severe than that of the Maya, but, like Maya art, exhibits a symbolism which presupposes a long period of development. The pottery also shows excellent technique, but with the same tendency to angularity in its modelled and painted decoration, while the textiles, of which many have survived, constructed on a tapestry frame and not on a true loom (at this period apparently unknown), show a great variety of colour, and a sense of proportion in spacing.



#### TOLTEC VERSION OF KUKULKAN

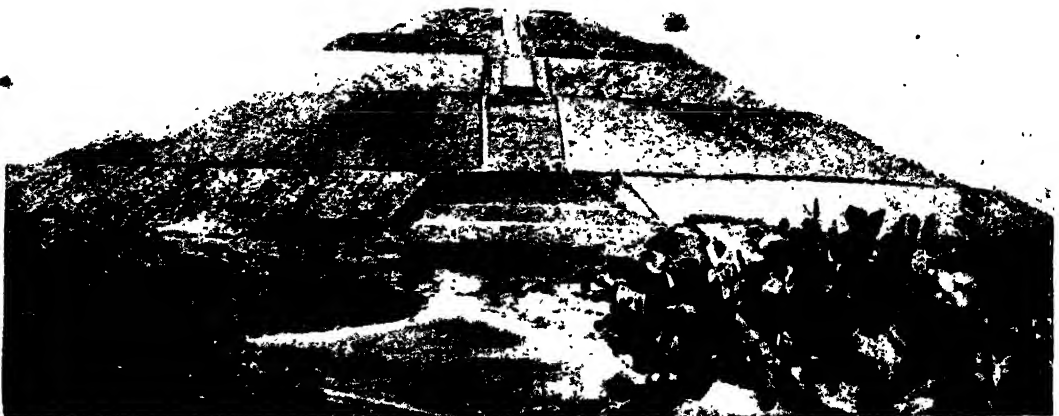
The Nahuatl-speakers translated the paramount Maya god Kukulkan literally into their own language as Quetzalcoatl. On one of the pyramids at Teotihuacan, from a relief background of a serpent-body in the stylised art of the Toltec, the heads of the Feathered Snake and Water Snake project alternately.

*Photo, Hugo Brehme*

These highlanders seem to have worshipped a paramount sky god, lord of rain and thunder, with a number of subordinate clan deities, mostly in animal form. Of sun worship, the official religion of the Inca, there is no trace at this early period.

The early culture characteristic of the Truxillo region, usually known as proto-Chimu, though fundamentally similar to that of the Tiahuanaco people, was influenced by the local geographical conditions. Stone architecture is not found, for the very good reason that stone suitable for building does not exist on the coast. On the other hand, large structures in pyramid form, built of sun-dried clay bricks, take their place.

The rarity of rain in this region, the absence of rivers and the consequent scarcity of water, led to a remarkable development of the art of pottery (see page 2580, lower



#### THE TOLTEC AS BUILDERS : PYRAMID OF THE SUN AT TEOTIHUACAN

Transmitted probably through the Zapotec of Oaxaca, Maya influence penetrated to the heart of the Valley of Mexico, there to be assimilated by the invading Nahuatl-speakers—the Toltec and later their supersessors the Aztec. Of the great temple-bearing pyramids in the ancient Maya style that the Toltec erected at Teotihuacan, that above, the Temple of the Sun (so-called), 216 feet high on a base line of nearly 1,000 feet, is the largest in all Central America.

*Photo, Hugo Brehme*

illustration). The rapid evaporation produced by the climate necessitated a closed vessel with a narrow spout, but it is difficult to pour evenly from a vessel of this type. The proto-Chimu people invented a class of water vessel with a hollow ring-handle surmounted by a spout, and this served a double purpose. When the vessel was tipped the water ran down one side of the ring while air was admitted by the other; and the ring-form permitted the bottle to be carried slung from a belt.

These vessels, for perfection of technique and symmetry, are some of the most remarkable ever produced by a people ignorant of the potter's wheel; and are to us of great archaeological import-

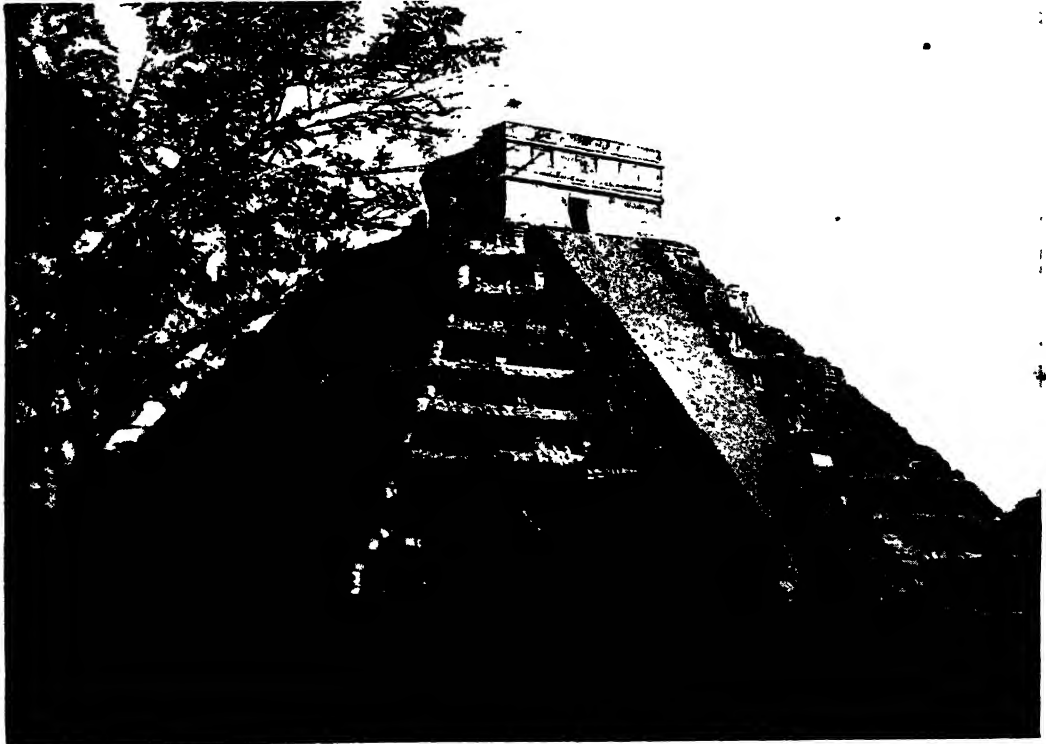


#### CONVENTIONALITY OF TOLTEC ART

In carving, the Toltec were more conventional, angular and monumental than the Maya. The last feature is especially apparent in this splendidly decorative onyx figure of an ocelot, although it is only 13 inches long; while every detail of the body is forced to conform to a preconceived pattern.

*British Museum*

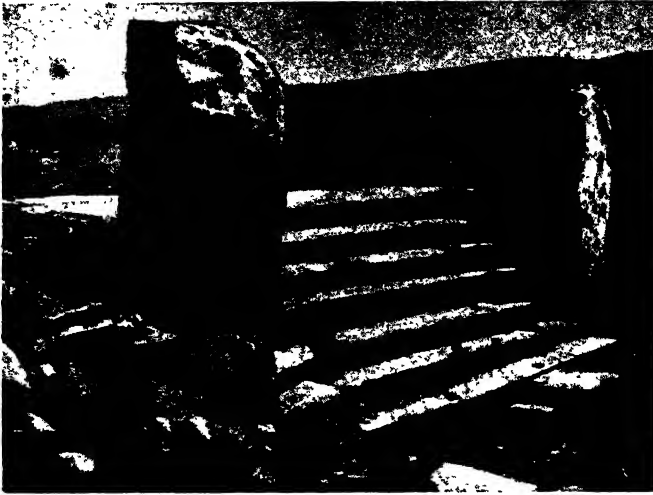
ance, because they afford many illustrations of the domestic and ceremonial



#### HUGE TEMPLE WHICH THE MAYAS ERECTED IN THEIR SECOND HOME

For a reason or reasons that we can never hope to ascertain, the Maya suddenly deserted their ancient settlements in the south during the fourth century A.D. The larger part migrated northwards to Yucatan, where there was a final flowering of Maya culture at such sites as Chichén Itzá and Mayapan, increasingly permeated and finally overlaid by Toltec influence. This great terraced pyramid, 85 feet high, scaled by a flight of steps and crowned by a temple, is at Chichén Itzá.

*Photo, Peterffy*



**STAIRWAY APPROACH TO THE KALASASAYA**

Tiahuanaco is on the high upland plateau of Bolivia, and here it seems was the seat of a great inland empire that spread into Peru, and even reached the coast, centuries before the Inca were heard of. Chief of the megalithic ruins that strew the plain for leagues is the Kalasasaya—a rectangular space surrounded by monoliths and approached by this monolithic stairway.

life of a people concerning whom even tradition is silent: They fall into two classes, painted and modelled. In the painted class the designs are applied in a reddish-brown slip on a cream background. The art is somewhat conventionalised, but illustrates various pursuits, hunting, fishing, weaving and so forth, as well as religious ceremonies.

The modelled class is unique in America, owing to a realism unparalleled in the rest of the continent. The vases in human form give us the most minute details regarding the dress, ornaments, weapons and even physical characters of the people. Certain of them exhibit so strong an



**VAST MONOLITH THAT MARKS THE PRE-INCA SITE OF TIAHUANACO**

The prehistoric ('pre-Inca') civilization of South America differs in many important ways from the Maya. One of these was the prevalence of megalithic building, even huge monoliths being employed for architectural purposes. At Tiahuanaco is a marvellous gateway hewn from a solid block of stone—the crack here visible was caused by earthquake. Though it is known as the Puerta del Sol (Gate of the Sun), the deity commemorated in its carvings is probably the rain and thunder god.

individuality that it is hard to believe that they are not actual portraits. At his best the modeller of proto-Chimu times, as an exponent of realism, had nothing to learn from the fictile artists of the Old World.

The textile art, in the form of tapestry, was also highly developed, but is distinguished by certain technical differences from that of Tiahuanaco. Moreover, the material is principally vegetable (cotton), whereas the textiles of the highlands are woven from llama or alpaca wool. Gold and copper were known and worked, but principally for ornaments, though copper spades were used in agriculture.

Religion appears to have been a system of clan-ancestor cult, the clan ancestor assuming the shape of some animal, combined with reverence paid to certain high gods connected with the moon and sea. There is no trace of sun worship on the coast in pre-Inca times, for the obvious reason that the life of the inhabitants was one long struggle against drought and the sun was less of a benefactor than a foe.

The third early phase of South American culture, with its centre at Nasca in southern Peru (and gener-

**Early Culture** allly known as proto-Nasca), **at Nasca** stands midway between the two already described; though it exhibits certain individual characteristics. The geographical environment was similar to that of the proto-Chimu area, and there is the same lack of stone building and the same development of pottery form devised for the preservation of water. But the latter question was answered in a different way. The typical Nasca vase has two spouts connected by a solid handle, one of which admits air while the other serves as an egress for the contents.

The decorative art, however, in its angular convention, approximates more to that of Tiahuanaco than that of the Truxillo area. Modelled pottery is rela-



THE STONE OF TWELVE ANGLES IN CUZCO

In Cuzco, which the Inca later made their capital, remains of their predecessors abound. The masons, in their contempt for the obstinate qualities of stone, actually carved every block to fit its own place, and the famous example here shown has no fewer than twelve angles, salient and re-entrant.

tively uncommon, but, on the other hand, there is a development of colour which, for richness and variety, surpasses the ceramic products of any other people living under similar 'primitive' conditions (see page 2580, top). This wealth of colour extended to the textiles, which, like those of the other contemporary culture developments, were tapestry rather than true weaving, but which are technically related more closely to those of Tiahuanaco than to those of the proto-Chimu.

The rise of these three centres of art and culture is obscure, but their later history seems to have been as follows. The Tiahuanaco culture spread, not only northwards along the Andes into Peru and southwards into the north-western provinces of Argentina, but also to the coast, at any rate as far north as Lima. This fact is proved by the discovery of vessels with designs of Tiahuanaco type, painted in the colours characteristic of the coast, underlying remains in late coast and Inca style. It is not unlikely that the remains of the Tiahuanaco period are the relics of an extensive inland empire, which in its later phases included the coast of central and south Peru.

The proto-Chimu culture does not appear to have fallen under the direct influence of the Tiahuanaco people, but

seems on the other hand to have exerted some influence among the tribes of the northern Andes. At any rate as far north as San Agustín in Colombia stone carvings have been discovered which bear a very close relation to proto-Chimu art. Several local pottery styles in the coastal valleys of northern Peru seem to have been founded on proto-Chimu inspiration. Some of these show a technical advance, usually in the introduction of a greater variety of colour, as in the pottery of the Recuay neighbourhood. But the artistic history is one of degeneration, and somewhere about the end of the eighth century A.D. there appears to have been a general artistic and cultural débâcle, resulting in the extinction of the three great early schools of art.

Some three centuries later came a renaissance, marked by the later Chimu culture in the Truxillo region, the later Nasca and the Inca at Cuzco. The two coastal areas, though conquered by the Inca at the end of the fourteenth century, continued to maintain their separate individualities until the coming of Pizarro, and therefore belong to Chapter 132.

As regards the rest of South America at this early period there is not much evidence to show that the inhabitants differed greatly in culture from historical times. Shell-heaps, 'kitchen-middens,' occur all down the Peruvian and Chilean coasts, and afford an indication that these regions were originally, before the rise of the proto-Chimu and proto-Nasca cultures, occupied by a simple fishing popu-



GOD AT TIAHUANACO

The statuary of the pre-Inca was rougher and more angular than that of the Maya, but, less overweighted with ornament, had a monumental simplicity. Legend credits this god near the Kalasasaya with oracular powers.

lation, whose last representatives may be the vanishing tribes of Tierra del Fuego. The most striking remains are the stone arrow-heads of Chile, which exhibit a perfection of technique in stone-flaking hardly to be surpassed by the finest productions of ancient Egypt. In Patagonia traces of man's handiwork have been discovered in connexion with the remains of extinct fauna, giant sloths and armadillos. But it seems probable that these creatures of a bygone age survived in South America long after they were extinct in the Old World.

The Amazon basin, with its dense forests, never witnessed the development of a superior culture. Maize cultivation was only sporadic, and probably introduced in Inca times. However, some of the tribes, principally of Arawak stock, developed the arts of pottery and stone carving to some extent, and with this development is associated the cultivation

of manioc, another plant indigenous to America. The origin of manioc cultivation provides an interesting question, owing to the apparently unpromising nature of the root. The principal varieties are highly poisonous, owing to the presence of hydrocyanic acid in the juice. The root had to be grated and the juice expressed in basket-work 'squeezers'; the pulp was then washed thoroughly in running water, and the meal after drying was cooked in a variety of ways. This same meal, after being subjected to a further process, becomes the tapioca of modern kitchens. Early experiments in the use of this root



for food must have produced a heavy casualty list, and it is remarkable that a primitive people should have elaborated the process which renders it harmless.

A survey of early American culture, as revealed by the spade and interpreted in the light of our knowledge of the social conditions of the natives at the time of the Discovery, brings to light certain definite points which cannot be neglected in any discussion of its origin.

It is clear that the aboriginal American stands nearer to the Asiatic, on physical grounds, than to any other race of mankind. It is highly improbable that mankind was evolved in the Americas, and the population of the double continent must, therefore, have been the result of immigration. The physical type points to Asia as the original home, and this indication is reinforced by geographical considerations. It is unlikely that America was peopled by one great wave of migration; the physical variation almost precludes this possibility, and the most obvious route, via Bering Strait, could not have afforded ingress to large hordes of immigrants.

America must have been peopled by a sort of spasmodic infiltration, in the main by tribes who were forced to pass through an Arctic environment. The process must have been lengthy, and if the immigrants originally had any knowledge of weaving or pottery, that knowledge can hardly have been preserved under the combined circumstances of Arctic life and migration.

It is quite clear that the level of early American material culture varies directly with the intensity of agricultural life, and is based entirely on a plant indigenous to America, the maize plant, which was unknown to the Old World before the voyage of Columbus. The evolution of the many varieties of cultivated maize from a wild plant, not yet identified with certainty, suggests a long period of settled life in America which had at least no reflex action on the Old World. And the domestication of the llama and alpaca in Peru and Bolivia reinforces the isolation of American culture.

On the other side, the absence of Old World cereals in America; of any domestic Old World animal save the dog; of any sort of wheeled traction (present in Mesopotamia in the fourth millennium B.C.);



**POLYGONAL MASONRY OF THE PRE-INCA FORTRESS AT SACSABUAYMAN**

Cuzco lies some 300 miles north-west of Tiahuanaco; in its streets the buildings of three epochs lie superimposed—massive pre-Inca foundation, neat Inca superstructure and flimsy Spanish adobe atop. But its most stupendous monument spans a hill outside the town—the triple fortress walls of Sacsahuayman, built of huge blocks of which all but the hugest have been pillaged. Yet what remains is still gigantic, and the scale may be gauged from the figures standing against the upright stone in the centre above.

and of the potter's wheel, which was used in Elam and Mesopotamia at about the same date, indicates that Old World technology either did not affect American culture seriously, or that the people who colonised America had not discovered, or had lost, these

**Independent origin of the Civilizations** particular cultural features. The whole history of pottery, as far as it affects the higher phases of early American culture, suggests independent invention. The close relationship with coiled basket-work, a technique uncommon in eastern Asia, combined with the almost complete lack of pottery in the northern regions of North America, precludes the possibility of the ceramic art having been introduced by any northern route. It cannot have been introduced by the Polynesians, because no pottery is known in Polynesia.

A new view of the development of civilization has been introduced by the so-called 'diffusionist' school, which presents the theory that arts, crafts and religious practices had a single centre and were spread throughout the globe by migrating peoples in quest of gold, regarded as the elixir of life. These peoples were acquainted with megalithic building, were sun worshippers, practised mummification and sought pearls with the same assiduity as gold. Egypt is considered as the centre of diffusion of world culture.

The theory is, in reality, a revolt against previous ideas which held that human culture was exclusively the result of environment, and is justified to the extent that the 'environmental' school undoubtedly paid too little attention to the secondary transmission of technical methods, and of religious practices, communicated from tribe to tribe. But the pendulum has swung too far to the other extreme. Independent invention is denied: the possibility of 'convergence' is neglected. The influence of environment provided by altitude, flora and fauna is not taken into account. Geographical barriers are overlooked, and the whole question is frequently confused by the use of small-scale maps.

Application of the 'culture complex' of sun worship, megalithic building, pyra-

mids, gold seeking and mummification to the two great centres of early American civilization produces results which are entirely negative. In the early Maya region pyramids exist, it is true, but, apart from the stelae, megalithic building has been found only at one site, and that about thirty miles from the *Atlantic* coast. Except for one single find, of doubtful date, there is no evidence of gold working at this period. There is no trace of mummification; and such evidence as exists suggests that the sun god played a very subordinate part in worship. The sun cult only rose to importance under the Aztec regime, and was associated with cremation.

Moreover, the centre of Maya civilization lies far down the Atlantic watershed, and the culture in the direction of the Pacific becomes a more and more attenuated reflection of this early development as one proceeds westward. If Early Maya culture was introduced from the Old World, it is remarkable that it should have left no trace of its

passage on the Pacific slopes or in the western portion of the Atlantic watershed.

And the Maya calendar has no parallel in the Old World, beyond the fact that in its final form it arrived at a solar period of 365 days. And since the solar year is determined by nature and not by man, it is clear that agricultural peoples, who must necessarily observe the progress of the seasons, will, in the course of time, arrive at the predestined answer. But the division of the 365-day period amongst the Maya is strikingly different from that prevalent in the Old World, while the ritual calendar is unique.

Parallels have been drawn between certain phases of Asiatic stone architecture and that of the Maya, and here undoubtedly there is a resemblance, due to the fact that in both localities the false arch was used for roofing. As mentioned above, the form of buildings erected on this principle must conform to a certain type, and the apparent similarity may be explained by 'convergence.' In any case, the comparatively late date of Cambodian structures (see

**Breakdown of the 'diffusionist' theory**

page 2406), if independent invention be absolutely denied, would suggest that they were the result of American inspiration rather than vice versa.

The early culture developments of South America stand on a rather different footing. They face the Pacific, and here, if anywhere, influence from Asia might reasonably be found. But again the culture complex of the diffusionists breaks down. Pyramids exist on the coast, but no megalithic building. And sun worship was not introduced until Inca times after a very desperate war. In the highlands there were certainly megalithic buildings but no pyramids, and there is no evidence of sun worship until the Inca period. There remains the question of mummification. Here arises a double question: on the one hand what is the definition of a 'mummy,' and on the other, is there in this instance no possibility of convergence?

The practice of mummification in Egypt has been traced directly to the environment. In early times bodies buried in the hot, sandy soil became desiccated and did not decay. In the course of time the preservation of human remains, suggested

by climatic conditions, became a matter of ritual importance, and the process of embalming was

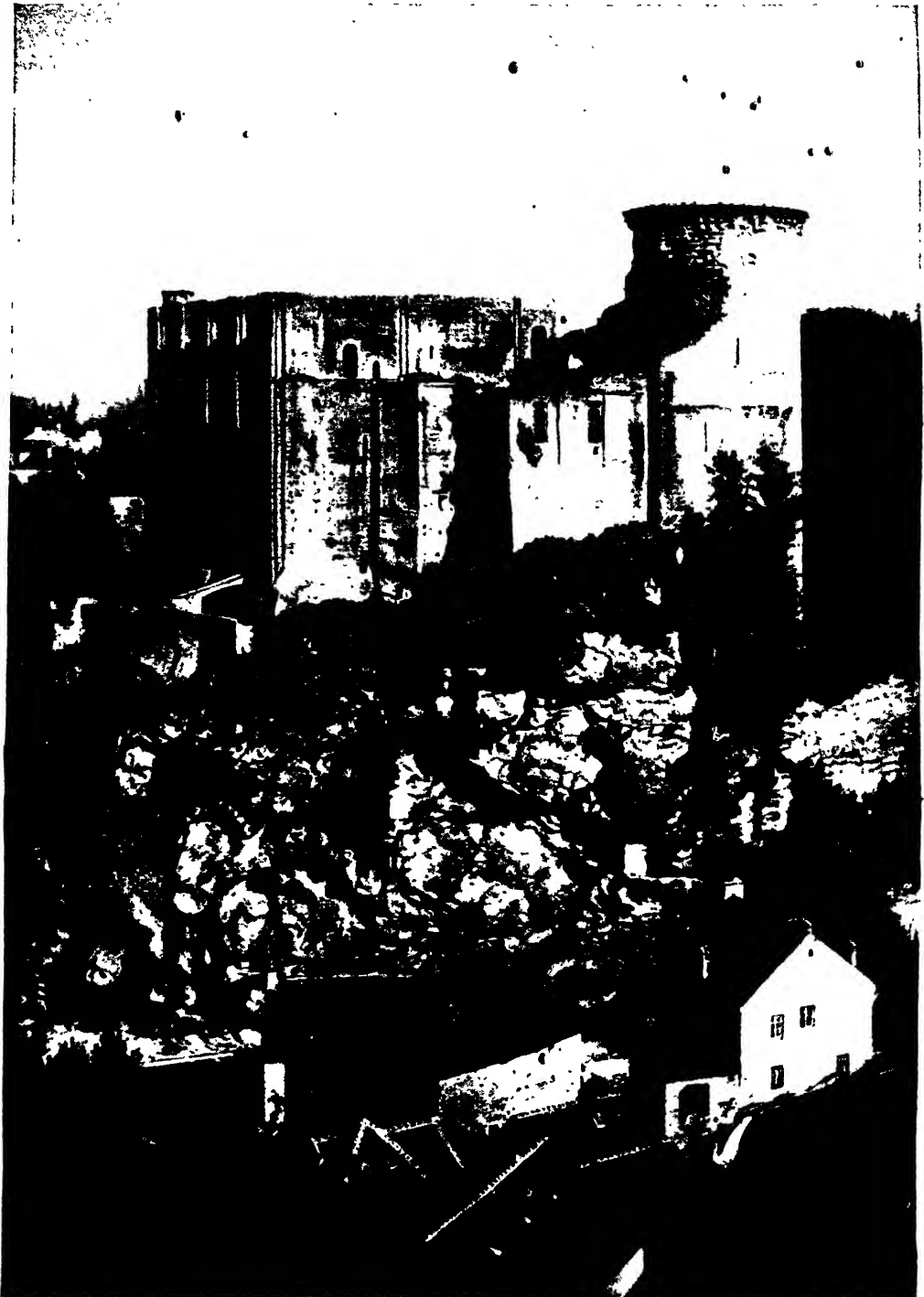
introduced as a supplement in aid of the local conditions. In early Peruvian sites desiccated bodies are found, but the climatic conditions are similar to those of Egypt. Both in the arid regions of the coast and in the rarified atmosphere of the highlands the normal process of decay was arrested. But in the early civilizations there is no trace of the application of any preservatives to assist the effect of climate. Even if these were used in later times, which is doubtful, the practice may well be attributed to 'convergence' dictated by similar conditions. But even if artificial methods of preservation were introduced from outside, and were not the logical result of climate, as in Egypt, they do not relate to the earliest phases of South American civilization.

It is not only possible, but probable, that the Polynesians in the course of

their extended voyages touched the coast of South America. But, from what is known of Polynesian history, it is difficult to see what contribution they could have made to American culture. They were ignorant of the art of pottery and of any sort of metal, and though in some of the islands remains of stone building have been found, the Polynesians did not reach Hawaii or the Marquesas before the seventh century A.D., and New Zealand before the ninth. The New Zealanders, it is true, developed a form of textile, based on basket work, which is also found among the tribes of the north-west coast of America, but if there is any connexion between the two it belongs to a period far later than that of the early Maya or pre-Inca.

The presence of the sweet potato in Polynesia has often been mentioned as evidence of contact, and with justification; because, **Contact with Polynesia** plant is supposed to be indigenous to America, it was known in Polynesia as 'kumara,' while its name among the Chincha people of Peru was 'kumar.' Yet, if the Polynesians, as is possible, found the American coast, they received more than they gave. They could have introduced neither pottery, metal working nor textile art in the form of tapestry, and though they understood the use of sails, it is a fact that sails were unknown on the coast of Peru before the time of Columbus.

Prehistoric America affords a magnificent field for archaeological research. The double continent, peopled by immigrants from the Old World, seems, on the evidence available, to have developed a semi-civilization which ran on lines parallel to that of the eastern hemisphere. Many of the similarities can be explained by the psychology common to the human race, and by the convergence dictated by natural and mechanical considerations. What future investigations may reveal cannot be anticipated, but, in the light of our present knowledge, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the higher phases of American culture in the days before Columbus represent an independent development.



#### **BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR •**

Dominating the town of Falaise in the Department of Calvados, this mighty castle was a principal seat of the dukes of Normandy, and here, in 1027 or 1028, was born to Duke Robert by his left-handed union with Arletta, the tanner's daughter, the son who became William the Conqueror. The castle then consisted of a square mass defended by towers and flanked by a small donjon; the lofty tower on the right was added by the English in the fifteenth century.

*Photo, E.N.A*

# THE ADVENTURES OF THE NORMANS

Steps by which the unbridled Northmen of Scandinavia became the Rejuvenators of Western Europe

By C. W. PREVITE-ORTON

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**I**F it is good for us to see ourselves as others see us, there is also an advantage in seeing others as they see themselves, and the most vivid sketch of the Norman character may be found in the contemporary history of a monk who passed almost all his life in the Norman monastery of St. Evroul. This is how Ordericus Vitalis, French by extraction, English by birth, Norman by training, describes his compatriots at the time when their fame was spread far and wide, from Ireland to Palestine, in the days of Henry Beauchlerk, king of England:

The Normans are an untamed race, and unless restrained by a stern ruler are always ready for mischief. In all societies, wherever they may be, they struggle for the mastery, and spurred by ambition many a time are led to juggle with truth and faith. . . . In them their natural ferocity still abounds, and their inborn ardour for battle rages to such an extent that it does not allow the peasants and peaceful officials to remain in quiet in their dwellings.

And the southern chronicler, Geoffrey Malaterra, gives the Norman conquerors of his land a very similar report:

They are indeed a most crafty race, revengeful of injuries, despising their native fields in the hope of winning other, greedy of gain and of dominion, capable of all feigning, and keeping a kind of middle way between bounty and avarice; but their chiefs are most bountiful from love of fame. This race knows how to flatter, being so intent on eloquence that you would think the boys professional rhetoricians. Unless they are kept down by the yoke of justice, they are uncontrollable; when fortune requires it, they can endure labour, hunger and cold. They are zealous in hunting and hawking; they delight in good steeds, in splendid arms and armour, in magnificent garb.

Yet this stalwart, unamiable race of shameless individualists was destined to do great things for the peoples whom it tormented. The very admixture of the Norman blood seems to have acted like a tonic to communities long ground down to mediocrity in the social mill of old-established civilizations. But their actual work was all-important too. In the first place, they were destroyers, like the northern blizzard with which Ordericus compares them, and their onset blew away superannuated, helpless institutions **Stimulating Effect** and slowly ripening **of Norman irruption** degeneracies, leaving what was real and strong and rooted in fact and necessity to survive and remake western Europe. So in France, the Carolingian monarchy, based on obsolete conditions, gives way to the many feudal states and their no less feudal overlord the Capetian king at Paris. The disarmed central government is replaced by the local baron; he defends and oppresses the peasants who feed him and his troopers, while he belongs by kinship and vassalage to the loosely constructed group that forms a feudal county or duchy. Religion quits once more the enslaved, half-shattered official church for the wilderness, and thence captivates men's minds anew. So in England, a realm dissolving into dislocated provinces and stagnant villages is broken, fused and remade.

In the second place, the Normans, destructive as they were, were also builders and transmuters, who, if they brought few new ideas to the stock of civilization, were adroit in borrowing and combining what they found and learnt. The shattered



NORSE SHIPS OF NORMAN INVADERS

From their immediate forebears, the Scandinavian sea rovers, the Normans of Normandy inherited the open long-ships that had harried the coasts of France. This vessel, in which they are depicted in the Bayeux tapestry crossing the Channel, is almost a replica of the Gogstad Viking ship shown in page 2519.

society of their day needed most of all a framework, a defensive shell and an organized system of government, under which and through which not only art and literature and commerce, but the social sense itself and the habit of life by law in a community could revive—this time again annexed to fact and obvious instincts and expediency, and no more as ghosts of ideas no longer understood or as fossil remnants of a better past.

The Norman race, however, was itself transmuted during the three centuries which elapsed between the death of Charlemagne and the First Crusade, so that they appear in two successive manifestations: first, as the Scandinavian sea rovers, Danes, Norwegians and Swedes, who harried and partly conquered the coasts of France and the British Isles; secondly, as the Normans proper, the mixed race of Scandinavians and North French, who inhabited the land called after them, Normandy. It was the Normans of the second phase who proved themselves builders and adapters as well as destroyers.

Their life and character in their first phase as pure Scandinavians are the theme of the chapter on the Vikings (Chap. 96), and here we need only take them as they land on the coast from their open long-ships, and the big-boned crews leave their oars and harry the countryside with fire and

sword. As the ninth century wore on, these raids became combined operations of many ship-loads, and in each country they attacked—France, England or Ireland—the method was much the same. The Viking fleet sailed up a great river artery, the Seine, the Loire, the Thames or the Humber, anchored their ships at some defensible place, preferably an island such as Sheppey or Oscellum, fortified a camp, and then, seizing all the horses they could find, began to raid and plunder the country.

Mobile, fully armed and compact, they were more than a match for larger forces of

a levy en masse of the natives, in the main half-armed farmers and peasants; and the numbers on each side must not be exaggerated. A Northman army can seldom have mustered more than a very few thousands—more often they were hundreds; and from the sparse population of English and French villages, hemmed round with woodland or marsh, the numbers levied cannot have been much greater. To gather a fully armed force of trained warriors outnumbering the invaders meant skimming a wide territory of its true fighting men. Meantime monastery, town and village went in flames, and the remnant of the peasantry hid in their surrounding woodlands.

We may notice several phases in these invasions. As their forces grew larger, schemes of conquest and settlement under famous leaders began

to be the Northmen's objective. Guthrum conquered East Anglia, other chiefs Yorkshire, others, for a time, Frisia or Holland; Hasting made alternate attempts on North France and Mercia. But, as their methods were better known and the danger became more pressing, an energetic defence, which was far from ineffectual, was carried on by the kings and nobles of the invaded lands. Alfred the Great threw back Guthrum from Wessæx in years of fighting, and later

Successive phases  
of Viking invasions

repelled the formidable Hasting. Nor were Charles the Bald and the West Franks, or their kinsmen the East Franks of Germany, less valiant or persevering.

There is an oscillation of Viking attacks from the Continent to England and back again. Alfred's peace with Guthrum in 878 is the signal for fiercer raids on France. The successful resistance of Paris under Count Eudes (Odo) in 885-6, and the victory of Arnulf of Germany near Louvain in 891, are followed by Hasting's attack on England in 892. But that the brunt of the Northmen's attack was only diverted from one realm to another shows how little abatement of its force was effected. On the other hand, the Northmen abandoned the hope of limitless conquests, and we come to the phase of limited colonies, to the settlement of the Danelaw in eastern England from the Tees to the Thames, and to the foundation of the

**Treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte** duchy of Normandy by the treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte in 911. By the cession of the counties at the mouth of the Seine, Charles the Simple, the king of France, submitted to the fact of a Norman state in his dominions, and the Viking leader Rollo consented to become a Christian and a vassal in return for a fragment of France. A third phase of Scandinavian invasion, perhaps, may be noted in the conquest of England by Sweyn and Canute the Great of Denmark; but this was really in one sense a forcible alliance with the neighbour kingdom of Denmark, in another something like the predominance of the Scandinavian element in the country, settled there by the earlier and true migration.

This conquest of Canute, however, typifies and symbolises the strikingly different influence of the Scandinavian migration in England and in France. In England, although the effect may have been otherwise in Saxon Wessex, the result of the Danish settlement was to put the clock back and withdraw England away from continental tendencies and towards the more primitive and freer state of the barbaric north. Whereas in Wessex the peasant was rapidly sinking into a serf owing heavy dues to his lord, in the

Danelaw there was a large class of free, if often petty, landholders who could choose their lord at will. Feudalism and its adjuncts, in short, the specialised, military landowner with his share of public jurisdiction, with his following of armed vassals and his villages of agricultural serfs, were slow to come into existence in the Danelaw.

In Normandy and France, however, the Normans had proved a powerful stimulant to the development of feudalism in its most pronounced form. Their invasions had given strength to every feudalising tendency in the Carolingian realms, and they themselves, once settled in Normandy, not only lost their native language and adopted French with astonishing speed, but absorbed equally rapidly the customs, laws and ideas of their new country and gave the borrowed framework of feudalism itself its most coherent embodiment. The Carolingian Empire had fallen not so much by the sins of the Carolingian dynasty, whose members were usually able enough at least, as by its own unwieldy bulk put to unexampled external strain by Norman, Magyar and Saracen. At heart semi-barbaric, without a civil service, without bureaucratic method, without a standing army, without a revenue from taxation, it had aped the Roman Empire of the past both in its ideas of a state and in countless legal forms. Such a state might last while Charlemagne kept all wars at the frontiers and unweariedly patrolled his dominions in person. Without him the local noble, who could act locally, was sure to take over the public powers, and group round himself the fully-armed, mounted land-holders, who furnished the only efficient and mobile troops to be had.

As has been said, the Carolingians, if bad, were mostly able; but they had pauperised the crown by their lavish gifts of land to buy the support of the magnates in their fratricidal wars, and they daily became more dependent on their dukes and counts and many lesser barons. Thus, out of landed wealth, delegated power and armed horsemen bound to their lords by the

#### Beginnings of the Feudal System





ARMS AND TRAPPINGS OF THE NORTHMEN

Interesting parallels to the Norman military equipment opposite are provided by a number of twelfth-century Scandinavian chessmen found in the Island of Lewis. Especially notable are the helmets and blazoned shields of the mounted knights (bottom) and of the centre-piece. King and bishop (top) are equally Norman in type.

*British Museum*

ceremony of homage and the oath of fealty, feudalism took its beginnings. When the Northman invasions spread, although Charles the Bald might plan a skilful campaign, he could only be in one place at once and gradually summon thither an army by his nobles' leave. The real effective resistance could only be made locally by those very nobles at the head of their troop of vassals. Each feudal castle of refuge, each petty profitless

fray, such as those which gave Robert the Strong, founder of the Capétian house, his name of the Frankish 'Maccabee, diminished the hoped-for returns of booty and made the Viking career less attractive. No wonder, then, that the close of the Viking period saw France ruled by hundreds of feudal barons grouped round a number of greater feudal princes.

Of these greater princes, one of the greatest was the duke of Normandy. At the end of two generations from the treaty of St. Clair-sur-Epte, the duke and his subjects were French in tongue and habits. Their physique itself was being modified. Though a large proportion were still blond, they were as a whole becoming of shorter stature than the Germans, and a thick-set, black-haired type was frequent among them. Over his wide territory, which extended up the Seine to the river Epte and along the coast from Mont. St. Michel to near the Somme, the duke ruled with literally regal sway, for he claimed within his duchy to exercise all the royal prerogatives.

He was, however, not only the king's deputy but the vassal of another potentate, the Capétian duke of the French. This vassalage was the seal of an alliance at an epoch-making time. The Carolingian king Louis d'Outremer had treacherously attempted

to re-annex Normandy from its young duke, Richard the Fearless, the grandson of Rollo. Richard in wrath became the close ally of the most potent subject of the French crown, Hugh the Great, duke of the French; and, as we have seen, did him homage as his vassal. It was Norman support which later did much to help Hugh the Great's son, Hugh Capet, to oust the Carolingians and become king of France in 987; and the

alliance continued with alternations of mutual assistance for another sixty years until the formidably growing power of William the Conqueror turned his overlord and former friend, King Henry of France, into a permanent enemy.

It would be out of place here to recount the series of the Norman dukes or even the early deeds of the greatest of them, William the Bastard, later called the Conqueror, in any detail. Born, like several of his predecessors, of a handfast union—of his father Robert with Arletta, the tanner's daughter of Falaise—left duke at the age of seven by the death of that father on pilgrimage in 1035, he succeeded in the great victories of Val-des-Dunes and Mortemer in taming the turbulent Norman barons and in re-establishing all and more than all the ducal authority over his duchy. Before we turn to the new outburst of Norman energy which made the duke and his subjects the most renowned race of the Middle Ages, it will be well to see what was their state at home, and how the strongest government of the West could co-exist with the most turbulent vassals to be found.

The duke's authority had two sources, royal and feudal, and it is characteristic of a strong and wealthy medieval monarchy that its feudal side brought it an accession, not a diminution, of power, for the rights that feudalism gave a suzerain were both stringent and profitable. As deputy sovereign the duke had large estates and valuable financial dues scattered over the duchy; in justice he held the 'pleas of the sword,' like murder, which involved life or limb, and which could

belong to a baron only by his special grant. Normandy was partitioned into a number of circumscriptions called 'vicomtés,' each ruled by a viscount appointed by the duke; this official held a court, gathered in the ducal income, kept order, guarded ducal castles. Then the duke on occasion could call out the 'arrière-ban,' that is, the levy en masse; like the Frankish kings, he could order his subjects to give him information on oath, the so-called 'sworn inquest'; he had the right of coining money; his 'curia' was the supreme judicial court; and last, not least, he controlled the Church in Normandy, which formed the



Knights had mail hauberks, conical helmets, swords and lances. Ecclesiastics generally wielded a mace (right, Bishop Odo of Bayeux).



Knights' shields were kite-shaped and their swords long and broad-bladed. Their horses were heavy beasts, like the modern shire horse.



Archers did good service, but the decisive fighting was hand-to-hand, the shock of the heavily armed knights' charge, being usually the determining factor in the battle. Right, the Saxon housecarles on foot fight the Norman knights at Hastings. Being contemporary with the events described, these Bayeux tapestry pictures are accurate.

### WEAPONS AND ARMOUR OF THE NORMANS

ecclesiastical province of Rouen. This meant that he appointed the bishops and great abbots, controlled their synods and their legislation, and indirectly supervised their special courts, which dealt with moral and church offences. Only four or five petty counts broke, as far as they did break, the unity of this administration.

As feudal suzerain the duke was ultimate owner of almost all the duchy's land, which was held from him in military service.

This meant that, besides his demesne knights, he could summon some eight hundred knights for forty days a year; and by a wise provision of Norman feudalism all sub-tenants owed their first allegiance to the duke and only in the second place to their immediate lord. The barons and other tenants-in-chief who held directly of the duke owed him service in peace as well as in war; they were bound to attend his 'curia,' or solemn court, to advise him in judicial and other business; they paid 'reliefs' to succeed to their fiefs; they could build castles only by his licence, and on terms of admitting his garrisons at demand; they paid the feudal 'aids' for his ransom, the knighting of his eldest son, and the marriage of his eldest daughter.

To all this and more they were bound by the feudal oath of fealty, and by the still more sacred homage. In the latter ceremony the vassal knelt unarmed before his lord, between whose hands he placed his own, and thus became his 'man.' Altogether a strong and wealthy prince could almost exploit his barons. With a fool or a weakling the ducal authority would go to shivers in a general mutiny.

The upper stratum of Norman society, including the barons, numbered some 1,200 to 1,400 fully armed knights, and below them came a class of freeholders, called vavassors, who had not the full knight's outfit and fought on foot. Arms had always been expensive, and now that the Normans, like their French neighbours, had taken to fighting by preference on horseback, the full knight's outfit could only be maintained by a full 'knight's fee' of land. It included the heavy horse, like the shire horse of the

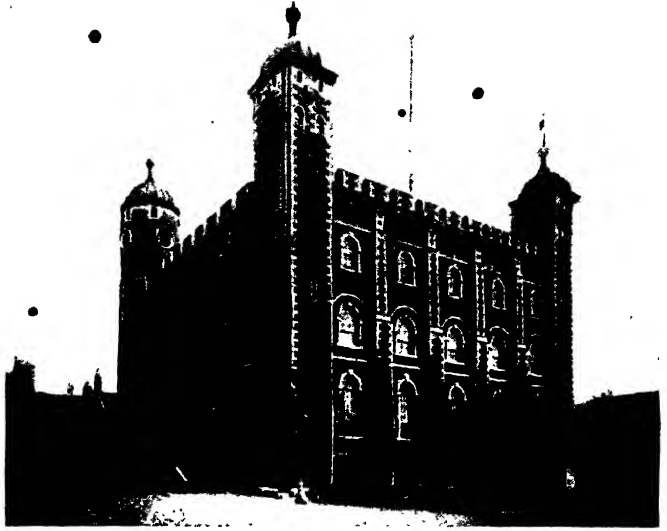
present day, fit to bear the weight of its panoplied rider; then there were the long hauberk or shirt of linked mail reaching to the knees, the kite-shaped shield, the mail hood for the neck and the conical steel helmet with its nose-piece. The weapons were the long lance, with its pennon, for charging, the broad-bladed long sword, the battle-axe, and its variant the mace preferred by valiant ecclesiastics to avoid the technical shedding of blood, and lastly the dagger. The vavassors would have to be content with a round target, a shorter sword, javelin, dagger, and bow and arrows. Although they did good service, like the archers at Hastings, the decisive factor in both battle and skirmish was the charge of heavy-armed knights on horseback. Of generalship, beyond a few striking exceptions, there was little or none. A suitable charging ground and, if possible, surprise were the things aimed at.

The homes of these warlike nobles varied with their rank and wealth. The duke had his great square stone castles, like the White Tower in the Tower of London or the castle at Rochester. The baron **Fortress homes of the Norman lords** built in stone when he could afford it; more frequently his castle consisted of a square wooden tower erected on an artificial mound, the earth for which was obtained by excavating a moat around it. Outside this moat lay a bailey or courtyard surrounded by a stockade on an earthen rampart, which in its turn was excavated from an outer moat. The keep was entered by a bridge over the inner moat; the bailey by a similar contrivance (see plan in page 2715).

Fire could be partly guarded against by hides spread over the timber. Even the wooden castle, however, could only be built by ducal licence. The appearance of unlicensed 'adulterine' castles was a sure sign of anarchy and weakness, while a strong and well-supported ruler at once demolished them. Even a private war of any importance involved sieges, while a public war, like those waged by Henry I, was full of them. The capture of a castle always required time with the imperfect siege apparatus of the day, and time was

what a leader of feudal levies serving only for short periods could rarely afford. Thus the castle had a value beyond its seeming strength.

The favourite occupations of these Norman nobles were war and hunting; with a preference for war. Their best outlet at home was in family and personal feuds, strictly limited in law, of which the pages of Ordericus are full. The deeds of the hatefully cruel house of Belesme and their like provide a full tale of atrocities, treachery, murder, mutilation, which perhaps give a too



#### FORTRESS KEEPS OF NORMAN LORDS

Norman military architecture is finely exemplified in England by the remarkably well preserved White Tower (top)—the oldest portion of the Tower of London—built to the plans of William the Conqueror in 1078. The Norman keep of Rochester Castle (bottom) was begun at the order of William II.

*Photos, Frith & Co., and H. N. King*

gloomy picture of Normandy in general. At any rate the dukes sternly repressed these doings to the utmost of their power. Among the chief sufferers were the peasantry, whether the full serfs who paid heavy dues and performed a full tale of 'works,' or the more favoured 'guests' ('hospites'), who seem to have been free tenants. Their crops might be destroyed, themselves killed or maimed.

Perhaps their best protection against the mutual outrages of their lords lay in the provisions of the Truce of God, introduced into Normandy in 1042. This forbade hostilities from Wednesday sunset to Monday sunrise, and endeavoured to shield the husbandman and the merchant. Such ordinances emanating from the Church were enforced by strong dukes, and if too often of dubious effect may have helped to prevent the recurrence of the peasants' revolt of 997. It is to be remembered also that the atrocities of the bad figure most easily in chronicles; on the other side we merely

hear that a knight might have been taken for a model by all living men. That he did justice in his manorial or baronial court, that he was peaceful, loyal and merciful, appear only in the collective portrait of a lifetime, for no single act of it burnt itself into the memory of men.

The race, however, was hard at best, and its women matched its men. Besides such figures as Henry I's contemporaries, Robert de Belesme or Eustace de Bréteuil, we find fit counterparts in Aubrée of Ivry, who beheaded the architect of her tower that he might never build the like; or Mabel de Belesme, murdered by a knight she had disinherited. These terrible women are hardly typical, but there was a strain of the virago in much more reputable figures. Henry I's daughter, the Empress Matilda, led her faction against King Stephen and conducted a war as to the manner born; Isabel de Montfort rode in armour on foray, much to the admiration of Ordericus the chronicler. These and



#### NORMAN BATTERING RAMS

In Norman times siege apparatus was very imperfect. This illustration from an eleventh century manuscript depicts the prophet Ezekiel with wheeled 'moutons' about him—puny engines to bring against the walls of Norman castles.

*From Viollet-le-Duc, Military Architecture of Middle Ages*

their like overshadow, perhaps unjustly, the many milder ladies known by the generalities of their epitaphs.

Norman life apart from war is not very easy to picture. The best of it was out-of-doors in the chase, so cruelly preserved for the nobles by barbarous forest laws, in which mutilation and death were common punishments. The mimic warfare of the tournament was coming into fashion in the eleventh century; it consisted in the



#### ENGLISH AND BRETON PRINCES WHOM THE NORMANS OVERCAME

Brittany had long been coveted by the dukes of Normandy, and in 1064 William defeated Conan II of Brittany. In the same year Harold's visit to the Norman court led to incidents on which William afterwards relied to justify his invasion of England. These strips of the Bayeux tapestry show both William's victims: above, Harold out riding with hawks and hunting dogs, and, below, Conan surrendering the keys of Dinan—a wooden keep on a mound—to the Norman besiegers.

jousting of two knights together, but more especially in the combat of large parties in the *mêlée*. To the participants it was little less dangerous than real war, while infinitely less burdensome to the peasantry. But tournaments were not for every day. The castles were dark, draughty and smoky; feasting and listening to tale or song must have been the chief entertainment in them. Yet there were clerkly nobles, too, bred for the Church perhaps, and not always accepting the vocation. They, like the monasteries and their founders, help to complete a picture which is not all fire and rapine and slaughter, nor even law-making and tax-collecting.

Some evidence of a growth of what, in comparison with the condition of much of France, may be

**Prosperity grows** termed peace and prosper-  
**in Normandy** ity, although to our

modern notions the words seem absurdly misapplied, is to be found in two facts of the eleventh century: the rapid growth of population and the revival of monastic foundations, the latter being no bad symptom of an evil time beginning to turn into a better. Increased security, increased food supply and an increased susceptibility to Christianity were all implied. To take religion first. The Cluniac reformation was brought to Normandy under Duke Richard the Good, by William of Volpiano, abbot of St. Bénigne at Dijon, in 1001, and in the next sixty years monasteries rose with some frequency over the country. Such a one was the famous Bec founded in 1034 by the ex-knight Herluin, and made a European centre of learning by the Lombard lawyer Lanfranc. Unmixed religious impulse in its medieval garb of asceticism, the desire for learning and culture, the wish for cloistered peace and gentleness, the aversion, like Herluin's own, from the injustice and evil-doing which a vassal's duty to his lord might so easily entail, all these, apart and together, guided men to the monastic profession in

these days of revival; and by all, we may say, a better example was set and a better ideal was held up than was practicable in the ordinary feudal world around.

It was the increase of population which sent the now mingled race of Norman-French off again on the paths of emigration and adventure for over a century. Nothing is more remarkable than the size of the families which Norman knights and vavassors reared to maturity. The twelve sons of Tancred of Hauteville were no exception, and for this teeming progeny the bounds of Normandy were too narrow, though the woodlands might be cleared and the ploughlands grow. The twelve sons of a knight could not all live as knights unless they went abroad to win horse and arms and lands for themselves.

Wherever the clash of arms sounded in Europe and there was hire to be had, it was caught by Norman ears, and parties of adventurers and banished men were to be seen moving along the highways towards it. There was generally at least a tinge of religious motive about these enterprises which appealed even to men whose lives were criminal enough. War, however ferocious, with Moslem or schismatic or against a perjurer left no qualms of conscience. It was Roger de



**NORMAN ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE**

S. John's Chapel in the White Tower gives the type of Norman ecclesiastical architecture. It consists of a nave with vaulted arches and an eastern apse, a triforium and barrel vaulting. The cushion capitals were probably derived from pre-Conquest models, since they appear earlier in England than in Normandy.

*Photo, Friih*

Toesni, 'an intolerable firebrand,' who in 1018 fought for the count of Barcelona against the Spanish Moors, and he was followed by a stream of imitators for many years. The Normans in South Italy and on the Crusades deserve special mention later. Hundreds or rather thousands were thus drafted away from their native land ; but the greatest emigration of all was that led by the greatest man of Norman stock, the conquest of England by Duke William the Bastard.

William the Conqueror, to give him the new appellation he won, was, paradoxically, so typical a

**Character of the Conqueror** Norman in most ways as to be an exception, for in him the stronger qualities of his race were developed to the full. Tall and portly, a valiant knight of his hands, a tireless hunter, his physical vigour enabled him to support a government which was personal in every sense of the word, and to enjoy the endless journeys of a medieval sovereign who passed from manor to manor to eat up the produce and guard his own. William also had a real capacity for generalship, in his day the rarest of gifts ; his tactics at Hastings and Varaville were skilful, and his strategy in isolating London was worthy of being set beside them. As a diplomatist, the skill with which he obtained the papal blessing for his attack on England, and made his unprovoked assault appear almost a holy war, is truly remarkable.

But his greatest qualities were a marvellous strength of will and an admirable capacity for organizing and conducting business. 'Men,' said the Saxon chronicler, 'must will all that the king willed, if they would live ; or would keep their lands ; or would hold their possessions ; or would be maintained in their rights.' So, too, 'he was very stern and wrathful,' indeed utterly ruthless, as when he made recalcitrant Yorkshire a desert by systematic ravage. For his business powers we need only note that he organized the campaign of conquest, redistributed the land and reorganized the government of England, and carried through the unprecedented survey of Domesday Book.

The conquest of England begun at Hastings in 1066 took some five years

to achieve ; the reorganization of the kingdom was a longer process, only ending, if it did end then, with Domesday Book in 1086. Here we may treat the process in its completed shape. To begin with, there was the actual immigration of Normans and the very numerous other French adventurers who flocked for the spoil. How many these were it is hardly possible to say—the army of invasion had numbered some 5,000 men—but their coming must have had an appreciable effect on the sparsely populated England of the time with its three to five million inhabitants at most ; they meant an addition of talent and energy to the national stock.

Nowhere was this more conspicuous than in the Church : a swarm of eager, bustling French ecclesiastics, headed by the Lombard Lanfranc, the new archbishop of Canterbury, came to restore its discipline, to increase its efficiency and to introduce a new stir of art and thought. A fervour of building began. The Normans practised a version of the prevalent 'Romanesque,' with its small windows, round arches and heavy pillars. With this style of cathedral, abbey and church they began to cover the country, taking up many an English notion of decoration by the way. The establishment of separate ecclesiastical courts on the Norman system might turn out to be an ill in the future ; at the time it meant the introduction of a better justice in certain cases and of a working model of trial by evidence and law.

William undoubtedly meant to reign as successor of the native English kings. When the pope urged him to become his vassal he declined, for no former English king had done so. **Innovations in England** He had no intention to destroy either the independence or the government that he found ; but he did mean to innovate. What native institutions he found in good working order, adding to the efficiency of government and the strength of the crown, he kept ; and this more especially when they had analogies in his Norman experience. But he was also an innovator : the feudal spirit was indeed abroad in Saxon England, but it was leading mainly towards provincial earldoms and baronial jurisdictions



with manorial serfdom. William introduced the strict feudalism in tenure and service which he knew in Normandy as a valuable adjunct to his ducal power.

All land in England was henceforth held of the crown, even the unconfiscated Church lands. Lay land, not kept in the royal demesne, was granted out in feudal

vassalage; that is, with all the duties and liabilities we have seen in Normandy. The knight service due to the crown from barons and Church alike was some five thousand knights. As every feudal vassal owed his first allegiance to the crown, and indeed acknowledged the duty in person in the famous Oath of Salisbury, the crown, so far as feudal law went, was immensely strengthened; and the large and well distributed royal demesne made the monarchy able to exert its legal claims. It has been calculated that the income of the crown, its connexions and servants, was some £20,000 a year, that of the Church £19,000 odd, and that of about 180 barons £34,000 a year between them. Here we find another feature of William's settlement; the Saxon provincial earldoms were broken up, and only on the frontiers, like the Welsh borders, were solid liefs granted; the lands of most barons were scattered and hard to combine in a revolt.

This wholesale settlement of a Norman and French class of feudal landholders as a permanent garrison under new and stringent conditions and the rearrangement of the royal demesnes were William's first great task of reorganization in England; the second was the Domesday Survey. Royal commissioners took evidence on oath from representatives of each hundred or subdivision of the shire as to the ownership, the population, the sources and amount of income, and the taxable value of each manor within it; and the evidence was digested and written down in Domesday Book. This was indeed a unique achievement in the

eleventh century and of extraordinary value for the monarchy, which thereby knew its resources. The method, the 'sworn inquest,' was a Norman innovation; one chief object of it, the assessment of the Danegeld, was an instance of the conservation of an Anglo-Saxon institution.

Here we come to William's work of preservation of what he found. English kings had levied a general tax, the Danegeld; this right, lost elsewhere in the West, was kept. The old popular court of the shire was still functioning, a valuable check on feudal jurisdictions; it was retained. The English 'fyrd,' or national militia, was kept—in better working order than the Norman 'arrière-ban' which it resembled. The native law was left to stand with an admixture of Norman custom, such as the ordeal by battle. Like the law, the native sheriff, the royal officer in the shire-court, remained with powers, if anything, increased, and was assimilated to the Norman vicomte.

A Norman version of an English institution may be seen in the King's Council. The old English assembly of 'wise men,' the witenagemot, was transformed into the Curia Regis, which every tenant-in-chief was feudally bound to

TERRA Archiepi Cantuariensis.  
 In Comitatu Cantuariensi habet Archieps. xii. burgenses. 7. xxii. mansuras quas tenent de terra de villa in gilda sua. 7. reddunt. xxx. v. sol. 7. un. mod. de. v. sol.  
 S. Andrice uxor in suo proprio hays. hoc burgum tenet Archieps. et est de uisitu monachorum. 7. reddit simile sequenti regi sicut dower. et hoc testificant homines de isto burgum qd. antequam rex Edwardus dedisset illis hunc redditum regi. x. lib. tempore R. E. non erat ad firmam. Sed postquam Archieps. reddet. xl. lib. de firma. 7. xl. milia sillerib. ad uisum monachorum. In anno qu. f. 1085.

## EXTRACT FROM DOMESDAY BOOK

At the end of the year 1085 William the Conqueror dispatched royal commissioners throughout England to ascertain the ownership, population, income and taxable value of every manor; their returns were recorded in Domesday Book, so called because it constituted a judgement from which there was no appeal.

Record Office



### JUDICIAL COMBAT IN NORMAN ENGLAND

Ordeal by battle was a Frankish custom introduced into England by the Normans. In criminal charges accuser and accused fought in person, and the accused, if vanquished, was forthwith hanged or mutilated. If the accuser lost he was fined sixty shillings and became 'infamous' as a perjurer

*From the Curia Regis Roll, No. 216, Record Office*

attend at call. This heterogeneous assembly, which might vary from day to day from a few household officers to a complete gathering of barons and bishops, was the parent not only of Parliament, the privy council and the higher courts of law, but of all 'state departments. The Normans had an innate tendency to allot to officials appropriate spheres of work.

They also had an innate tendency to plot and to rebel, which the separation for a few years of England from Normandy encouraged. But the Conqueror's sons, the fierce and brutal William Rufus, the hard and selfish Henry I (Beauclerk), ended by taming this anarchic spirit awhile. Henry I, indeed, added to his father's work. Under him the exchequer, or finance department, with its ingenious chequered table, magnified from the abacus to facilitate addition and subtraction, began to sprout from the Curia Regis; to it the sheriffs came twice a year to account for receipts and expenditure, and to pay in the surplus income; and the first 'pipe roll' which records them dates from his reign. Under him justices-in-eyre began to go to hold the shire-courts and dispense royal justice there beside the sheriff. But after him came the anarchic days of Stephen, when the wicked instincts of the race came to fruition, when adulterine castles sprang up, and nameless torments were wreaked on the unhappy people by baronial scoundrels. Yet even then the instinct for rule and order was not dead. Many

barons more or less supplied the lack of royal control, and it was the wish of the majority for a settled government that brought Henry II. in unchallenged authority to an unchallenged throne.

It was not only in war and government and in Church matters that the Norman invaders transformed England. They were now Frenchmen, and they put the land once more in close touch with the tradition of Latin civilization gathered round the Mediterranean: what as Danes they had destroyed, as Normans

they more than renewed. S. Anselm of Canterbury was almost a Father of the Church, and a school

of historians arose, **Renewed contact with**  
equals of any in the **Latin civilization**  
West. The cult of

Canon Law, itself an offspring of the ancient Civil Law, was a cult of Roman civilization. Norman vernacular literature was a mere department of that of medieval France; nevertheless, it exercised an important influence on the whole by introducing the themes of Arthurian and Celtic legend from Brittany and Wales into French poetry and prose; and, again, as being one channel by which French literature transformed English from Anglo-Saxon into the Latinised tongue of Chaucer.

In the humbler task of exploiting the land the Normans were also proficient. The Saxons had been great village-founders in primeval woodland; now the Normans replaced woodland by arable, and with the increase of the food supply increased the population and the value of land. If the peasant and the fallen Saxon proprietor very commonly fell to the hard lot of a mere serf, a new energy and a new capacity reigned in England.

The settlement and the adventures of the Normans did not stop with England itself. They soon began to spread to the rest of Britain. The marcher barons took up with joy the border warfare with the various Welsh princes which they inherited, and under William II South Wales was conquered by and divided among them.

It was North Wales with its natural fortress of Snowdonia which they could not overcome. In the reign of Rufus, too, the last heir of the Saxon kings, Edgar the Atheling, led an Anglo-Norman army to place his nephew Edgar on the throne of Scotland, and thence followed a half-English, half-Norman migration north, which eventually led to Bruce and Balliol and Stewart becoming Scottish as well as Anglo-Norman houses; and with them they carried something of the Norman ways and civilization. The very last wave of the same impulse carried Richard Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, and other Anglo-Normans to Ireland in the days of Henry II, and, if their enterprise did not produce the same ultimate success as those of their kinsmen elsewhere, there are grounds for thinking that but for later misfortunes it might have done so.

It was a similar series of private enterprises which in the preceding century had led to the foundation of the second Nor-

man kingdom, that of Sicily. In 1015 some Norman adventurers in South Italy Norman pilgrims to the fane of S. Michael the Archangel, at Monte Gargano, met the Apulian rebel, Melo. Latin Apulia was seething with discontent against its Greek masters, and Norman mercenaries were sought and obtained. The actual revolt was crushed on the historic battlefield of Cannae, but the way had been shown to adventurous Normans and their value, even in a lost fight, demonstrated.

A few years later we find the Norman Rainulf in the pay of the duke of Naples and made count of Aversa. This began the Norman settlement and Norman rule in South Italy. Till the conquest of England no field of immigration rivalled it. Whole families like the twelve sons of Tancred of Hauteville came in detachments to carve themselves land and fortunes by their swords. They now had, in Aversa, a centre of their own, and were not only mere mercenary bands. Revolt soon flamed up again in Apulia; the prince of Salerno was their employer; and under the leadership of the Hautevilles they won a second settlement cut out of Byzantine Apulia.

Robert Guiscard ('the cunning'), a younger son of Tancred, typifies their method of conquest. Fixing himself in northern Calabria he led the life of a brigand chief; he starved the little towns into surrender by destroying their crops; and his band increased.

Like him were many others, and a wail of distress went up from the plundered land, now no longer defended by Byzantine troops or by its own princes, who were all weaker than the Norman captains. The reforming pope, Leo IX, in default of other aid, himself raised and led an army to exterminate these pests, but he was defeated and captured at Civitate in 1053; and a later pope, Nicholas II, adopted a startling change of policy.

But much had changed in the meantime. Robert Guiscard had been elected in 1057 to succeed his brother Humphrey as count of Apulia, and began turning his presidency over equals into a real monarchy on the model of Normandy, while all the time the conquest went on piecemeal. Perhaps at the suggestion of Cardinal Hildebrand, the pope, who needed a protector against Roman nobles and German officials, decided to ally with the Normans, unquestionably the leading military power of the south. Basing himself on the donation made to the Papacy by Charlemagne, and on the forged donation of Constantine, he made a feudal grant of Apulia and Sicily as duchies to Robert Guiscard, and of Capua to its Norman possessor, Richard. This treaty of Melfi (1059) meant a revolution in the Norman position: from anarchic bandits they became vassals of the Papacy with a lawful state. Hildebrand, as Pope Gregory VII, had occasion both to regret the measure when his faithless vassals seized on more territory, and to confirm it when he bought Guiscard's aid against his enemy the emperor Henry IV. The sack of Rome, perpetrated by the Normans in rescuing him, was the worst that the Eternal City had experienced from the barbarians.

Under the new regime it became possible that the conquest of Apulia from the Byzantines should be completed

in 1071, and that the conquest of Sicily from the Moslems, carried on chiefly by Guiscard's youngest brother, Roger, should come to an end in 1091. To relate how these conquests became the kingdom of Sicily belongs, properly, to Chapter 104; here we need only stress the peculiarities of the conquest. Unlike England, Apulia was conquered by many adventurous chiefs, who submitted to a single ruler and his rights on compulsion; Apulia therefore became the classic land of baronial disloyalty and revolt. Apulia, again, was only made a monarchy by the remarkable abilities of the Hauteville family; odious as Guiscard was, he was great in war and council; his brother Roger of Sicily was only less able; but what their talents gained was an artificial creation demanding equal talents to preserve—a difficult problem in hereditary succession.

In one way the Norman conquest of Sicily was closely connected with the Crusades, however different the immediate motive might be. Robert Guiscard was barely secure in Apulia before he began to attempt the con-

**Ultimate bourne** quest of the Eastern **Norman venture** Empire. He did not succeed, it is true, but he left the aspiration for eastern conquest in the mind of his disinherited eldest son, Bohemund; and Bohemund was one of the leaders and prime movers of the First Crusade. In that new migration the Normans took their full share. We may think of Palestine as the eastern limit of their wanderings.

It was not unnatural that, while its sons filled Europe with their wars and achievements, Normandy became less prominent. Like the rest of Henry I's dominions, it fell for a while under the disorderly rule of Stephen, and then accepted with joy Henry I's Plantagenet heir, Henry II, the Angevin. Henry II ruled Normandy like a native sovereign; and it could not help being the connecting link between England and his other French possessions. None the less, though it shared in the adaptive legislative reforms which in true Norman spirit marked his reign, it seems to stand out less in the

chronicle of his time. Richard I might fortify the province incomparably with stone walls, like those of Château Gaillard, but Norman pride in the duchy's independence seems to have oozed away, and it submitted with singular ease to Philip Augustus of France when he declared it confiscated from the odious John. We may suspect that the fever of Norman particularism had been allayed by the blood-letting of the emigration.

The function of the Normans in the history of civilization appears to be mainly that of a stimulus to more creative races. Each Norman, like the Scandinavian Viking before him, comes before us as abounding with rest-

**Norman services to civilization**

less individual energy, as possessed of a remarkable capacity to trade, which is allied to his quick perception of the merits and value of other men's belongings and an immediate desire to acquire them. It may have been because of their very individualism that, when unmixed in the north, they do not appear as the creative organizers of institutions that they became when blended with Frenchmen in Normandy. Their original outlook, that of the Sagas, was too individual and personal. Even the elaborate legal traditions of Iceland partake of the nature of a prolonged haggling between man and man. But in the lands of their settlement, in the process of melting into other nations, they both gave and took. They gave their energy, their business-like procedure, their aptitude for arranging the terms of a bargain, their prompt resource, their insatiable acquisitiveness.

They acquired a social outlook, a capacity for the joint enterprise of civilization, a reverence for the abnegations of religion. Hence in their latest phase they are creators of institutions, of efficient methods of carrying on community life, methods quite unlike those of jaded imitation current in Charlemagne's Empire; but new devices for new needs, simple, diverse, elastic, adaptable, able to grow and differentiate. These things, of inestimable value for the future, were some compensation for the addition they made to the sum of human misery.

# BYZANTINISM IN ITS VARIED ASPECTS

An Estimation of the Spirit that animated the Eastern Roman Empire and of the Debt that Europe owes to it

By F. H. MARSHALL

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CERTAIN features must ever be in the mind of the reader who would estimate aright the spirit of Byzantinism. It was at once Imperial Roman, Greek and also Christian; and the religious atmosphere and the defence of what was accounted orthodoxy were always prominent. The Greek element was not the classical, for that was the outcome of the city state; it was the Hellenistic Greek—the product of Alexander's conquests, by which the Greek language and Greek customs were carried into the East, and in process of time underwent considerable modification. Had it not been for Alexander, Byzantinism could never have played the rôle that it did in world history.

Byzantine literature carries on the tendencies of Alexandrinism (see Chap. 79), and produces what is essentially an encyclopedic literature that gathers up the heritage of the past. Thus in a sense a Photius is the counterpart of an Eratosthenes, and a Psellus of a Callimachus. The vogue of the world chronicle illustrates the same tendency, but a Procopius, a Malalas and a Constantine Porphyrogenitus give us invaluable information about the Byzantine Empire and its life, and the Byzantine historians are the most original of Byzantine writers. The Christian element was responsible for a vast polemical literature, much of which, indeed, strikes us as barren and tedious, but which is none the less representative of a most important aspect of Byzantine life.

Again, the preservation of the masterpieces of ancient Greek literature has been one of the chief services of the Byzantine Empire to humanity. The only living

form of poem was the epigram, another typical product of Alexandrinism, and it is significant that the Palatine Anthology was formed in the tenth century under Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

There has been much debate as to the precise period from which Byzantinism may be dated. Early in the fourth century A.D. Constantine the Great transferred to his new capital the institutions prevailing at Rome, and, though the population was mainly Greek, his laws and official pronouncements were in Latin. It was not until the reign of Mauricius at the close of the sixth century that Greek ousted Latin for official purposes; but it is generally agreed that it is the accession of the Isaurian dynasty with Leo III (717-741) that marks the coming into force of the real Byzantinism, for it was then that the Empire had to grapple with problems peculiarly its own, namely the fight against Islam, the great Iconoclastic controversy, and its relations with the neighbouring peoples, more particularly with the Slavs.

Fully developed Byzantinism cannot be understood without reference to the main political organization from the time of Constantine. This emperor carried on a system which had been inaugurated by Diocletian in the Roman Empire, whereby a career in the army was completely separated from a career in the civil service. All suitable men, whether senators or knights, could adopt one or other of these careers, and the emperor, like his predecessors of Rome, retained the controlling power in his own hands. He was in theory the nominee of the Senate or of

Beginning of the  
Byzantine period

the army, and their choice was ratified by the acclamation of the people. The sovereign thus acclaimed absorbed into himself the powers which had nominally been held by the Senate and the people under the early Roman Empire.

Certain new external features, inherited from the Graecised East or introduced under the influence of Christianity, are to be observed. Alexander the Great had accepted the custom of homage, and prostration before the emperors of Constantinople became customary; to the same source may be traced the gorgeous

state robes worn by the emperor and empress and by their court (see 'plate facing page 2302). Yet it must be borne in mind that these customs had already been introduced under Diocletian. As befitted a monarchy professedly based on Christianity, the emperor received the diadem from the hands of the patriarch of Constantinople, and thereafter acted as Defender of the Church.

It should be noted that in theory the Empire was elective and not hereditary, and that the emperor held a life tenure, unless, as was too often the case, he was overthrown by revolution. In practice, however, dynastic tendencies are to be observed from the very beginning of the Eastern Roman Empire, and from time to time this tendency is very marked, as in the case of the Heraclian and still more pronouncedly that of the Macedonian dynasty. Another feature of the Empire is the claim to world sway, which has its counterpart in the claim implied in the title of Oecumenical Patriarch. Hence the extreme reluctance of Constantinople to admit the imperial title of the Western emperors after the crowning of Charlemagne.

The chief check on the absolutism of the 'Autocrator' was the existence of a highly trained and minutely subdivided civil service, the full extent of which can only be realized by the study of such a work as the Ceremonies of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, parts of which, it must be remembered, are based on works of a date as early as the sixth century. The bureaucratic machine was assisted in its precise working by the maintenance of a most rigid etiquette. Probably no empire has been more thoroughly organized both on its military and civil sides than the Byzantine Empire. The emperor, further, on his acces-



#### IMPERIAL DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

The Byzantine emperors received their diadem from the patriarch of Constantinople as Christ's vicegerent. This ivory carving shows our Lord crowning Romanus and Eudocia—that is, either Romanus II and his first wife Eudocia (Bertha) in 945, or else Romanus IV and Eudocia Makrembolitissa in 1067.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; photo, Graudon*

sion took an oath to maintain the doctrines of the Orthodox Church and made a promise of clemency to his subjects—as far as it was possible. This promise was not altogether an idle formality; for, as Justinian had found, public opinion could sometimes make itself effectively heard in the Hippodrome (see page 2296).

The bureaucracy was centred in the capital under the Master of Offices, who was responsible for the vast imperial correspondence and the introduction of foreign ambassadors. The

**The Bureaucracy and Aristocracy** chief minister for finance was the Count of the

Sacred Largesses, a title which, though the scope of the office was infinitely wider, serves to remind us that the dole system was scarcely less important in Constantinople than it had been in Imperial Rome. The emperor's private estates were administered by another count. The City Prefect was, as he had been in Rome, the chief commissioner of police. An aristocracy of title, the patricians, created for life, went side by side with the titled officials. It may be added that it became a regular practice under the Byzantine Empire to purchase titles, and that in some cases a return on this invested capital was made in the form of a salary. It was a system which was extended to minor official posts, and these posts were negotiable securities. Those who are forward to condemn this feature of Byzantinism may be reminded that similar practices are not unknown in modern states, though they are generally veiled in a manner more decent, if less ingenuous.

For purposes of government the Empire was divided at first into four 'prefectures,' with a praetorian prefect at the head of each; a prefecture was split up into dioceses under vicars, and the dioceses into provinces under governors. The prefect was answerable for the supply of troops, the enforcement of laws and the raising of taxes in his prefecture. But, thanks to their right of direct appeal to the emperor, the different officials exercised a check upon each other.

The continuous wars against Goths, Persians, Avars and Slavs led to important modifications in the government of the

provinces, and to the supremacy of the military commander over the civil governor. This system arose in the seventh century with the creation of the themes, which were themselves the outcome of the exarchates formed in Italy and Africa. The change was important, for the 'strategus' (military commander) of the theme gradually united in his hands both civil and military administration, and by the time of the Isaurians this system was complete. The themes of Asia Minor, in view of the danger from the Arabs, naturally assumed a position of greater importance than the European, and Armenia furnished an excellent recruiting ground. Each theme had its own army corps, subdivided into brigades and regiments; but the numbers of troops were relatively low, and throughout the history of the Byzantine Empire it is noticeable that very much depended upon the personal character of the emperor, and the enthusiasm for service with which he could inspire the more warlike elements in the different provinces.

As regards the army generally, there was no system of universal compulsory service, and there was an increasing reluctance on the part of the citizens of the Empire to bear arms. In Constantinople itself there

**Unpopularity of Military service**

was no body of troops exactly corresponding to the praetorian guards of Imperial Rome; but the emperors had a personal guard called at first 'protectors,' then 'domestici,' and finally, from the ninth century, Varangians. Outside the capital chief regard was paid to the defence of the frontiers, and the bulk of the frontier troops, called Borderers, were supplied by those who had received lands, passing from father to son, with obligation to perform military service. But even amongst these there was a tendency to compound for service by a money payment. There were also court troops, the 'comitatenses' and 'palatini,' who had special privileges but bore an unsatisfactory reputation.

The troops were divided into horse and foot regiments, but the heavy cavalry, the 'cataphracts,' whose riders and horses were covered with mail armour, were a special



feature of Byzantine armies. A single general ultimately commanded both branches of the service, and the ranks of the regulars were swollen by volunteers, and were supported by barbarian troops, such as those of the Khazars between the Black Sea and the Caspian, under their own leaders. As time went on the Empire became increasingly dependent upon the support of foreign troops.

The Byzantine Empire for a long time paid but slight attention to its fleet, and even Justinian carried out his great expeditions without the aid of a large navy. Constans II (642–668), in view of his policy of recovering Italy and Africa, had to pay increased attention to the navy. Just as Augustus had maintained two naval stations at Ravenna and Misenum respectively, so Constans created two naval districts, under the control of a single admiral, namely that of the

Cibyrrhaeotis, centred in Pamphylia, and that of the Aegean, protecting the coast of Asia Minor and the islands. Later, after the naval revolt of Apsimar (698), the single command was split into two, and the strength of the navy declined, with the result that the Mediterranean swarmed with Saracen and Slav pirates, as it had in the last century of the Roman Republic with pirates of a different nationality, and Crete and Sicily were lost.

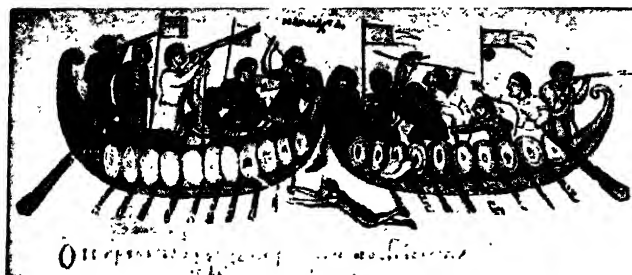
Under Basil I (867–886) the navy was revived, and a third naval theme, that of Samos, was created with its headquarters at Smyrna, and there was a fleet at Constantinople under the chief admiral, the 'great drungarius.' Yet it should be noted that the crews were chiefly formed by foreigners, such as Slavs, just as the Roman fleets had been manned by slaves and freedmen, and the inferiority of the naval service was thus emphasised. Still, the naval expedition of Nicephorus Phocas in 961, which led to the recovery of Crete, was a magnificent one, and fully avenged the appalling sack of Salonica by the Saracen pirates some sixty years earlier. The large fighting ships of the Byzantine



#### ARMS AND ARMOUR OF BYZANTINE INFANTRY AND CAVALRY

Clear representations of the equipment of Byzantine troops appear on numerous carvings. Like the mounted S. George (bottom centre), the cavalrymen above carry sword and spear and circular shield, but the former wears the heavy mail armour of the cataphract. Body armour, tunic and cloak of Roman military fashion are worn by the twelfth-century standing figure of S. George (left), who also wears greaves, which are not given to the S. Theodore (right) of the previous century.

Left: photo, G. Millet, *Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne*; right, Victoria and Albert, *Bargello (Florence)* and *British Museums*



### A NAVAL ENGAGEMENT

Notwithstanding the quaint disproportion in the size of men and vessels this tenth or eleventh century miniature conveys an idea of the Byzantine fighting ships. It possibly represents an engagement in Nicephorus Phocas' Cretan expedition of 961, or in the later expedition of 1016 against the Khazars

*S. Mark's Library Venice; photo, G. Millet, Hautes Etudes*

navy were the 'dromons' rowed by two banks of oarsmen, who numbered from three hundred to a hundred according to the size of the galley; there were also smaller and swifter ships called 'Pamphylians'. From a large wooden tower erected on the deck artillery discharged stones and other missiles, and from the seventh century onwards the more deadly weapon of 'Greek fire' was employed; it was generally discharged from the prows with the aid of gunpowder through flexible metallic tubes, but also hurled in pots like grenades. Its composition has never been exactly determined, but it probably had a basis of naphtha, and produced an explosive as well as an incendiary effect, as we know from Joinville's account of its terrors when used by the Saracens against the crusaders. 'Flame-throwers' are thus by no means a modern invention in warfare.

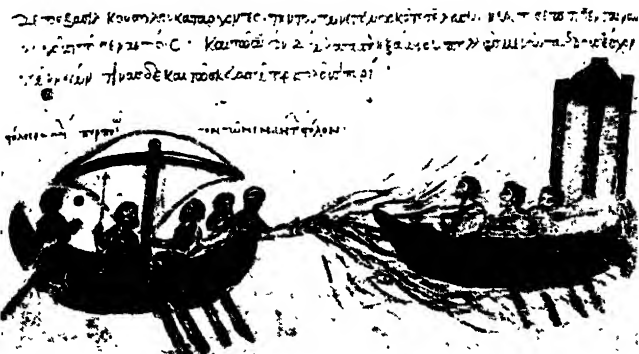
Military and naval tactics were studied with minute care by the Byzantines, and the works of Leo VI and Constantine Porphyrogenitus reveal an unsurpassed attention to detail. But we feel that though elaborate handbooks of tactics were drawn up, and the materials of war most highly organized, there was an absence of tradition and esprit de corps in the personnel of both the army and navy of the Byzantine Empire.

The maintenance of the army and navy required a

perfect system of taxation, for the purchase of volunteers in particular was very expensive. The land tax was the foundation of Byzantine finance. The total amount to be raised was announced each year by decree, and the sum to be paid by each district was settled through the prefect and the subordinate governors. The unit of taxation was a plot of land called the 'jugum,' varying in size according to the productive capacity of the land and the character of the crops

grown upon it; but in the end it came to be a tax upon the individual. It has been seen that the military defence of the frontiers under the Byzantine system depended largely upon landowners bound in perpetuity to the soil, and for the purpose of taxation the peasant proprietor, the 'colonus,' was bound almost in like manner.

The 'Farmer's Law,' probably put into shape in the course of the seventh and eighth centuries, shows how carefully the village, which was made responsible for the taxes, kept control over the solvency of the farmers within its radius; but the pressure of taxation was so severe that, despite repeated legislation to prevent it, the poor cultivator tended to transfer his land to the large landowners or ecclesiastical proprietors, who worked their estates



### GREEK FLAME PROJECTORS

Various combustibles were used by the Byzantines. Hand tubes were flung by grenadiers to explode on impact and pots of inflammable liquids were hurled by engineers. Greek fire, a liquid with a naphtha basis and both explosive and incendiary, was propelled through tubes manipulated by a 'siphonator'

*From MS. History of Skylitzes; photo, G. Millet, Hautes Etudes*



### HARD-WORKED TILLERS OF THE SOIL

Taxation bore so heavily upon the Byzantine landowner that the smaller men were compelled to transfer their property to the larger holders and to gravitate downwards to the class of serf labourers attached to the soil. This eleventh century miniature shows villagers tilling and pruning a vineyard.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

by slaves or serf-labourers tied to the soil. In this way he too became a serf, and a process went on by which serfdom became general and tended to displace the earlier slavery.

The Iconoclast emperors did their best to free the serfs, but in the long run their efforts were ineffectual, and the problem of the large estates ('latifundia') of the Roman Republic was repeated in a different form under the Byzantine Empire. The difference was that the Byzantine landowner on a large scale cultivated his fields more, and did not use them exclusively for grazing, and that his instruments of labour were serfs bound to the soil rather than slave herdsmen. It was these large landowners of Asia Minor, whose estates had been swollen by the farms of the small proprietor crushed out of existence by the taxation of the tenth century, who brought about the revolution of the next, set the Comneni on the throne, and triumphed over the senatorial aristocracy and civil bureaucracy.

The emperor was the focus of the court and aristocratic life of Constantinople, and it was he who determined the rigid ceremonial which was so conspicuous a feature of the palace, and is summed up in the work on the Ceremonies drawn up by the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in the tenth century. Here are determined with minute precision the dress and deportment of the vast number of grades and officials—the magistri, the patricians, the protospathars, the spathars, the hypati, the strators, the comites, the

candidati, and countless others, including senators, who had under the Byzantine Empire become a mere class.

It was the emperor, wearing his diadem, robes and purple buskins, who received and entertained the numerous foreign ambassadors and visitors in the magnificent halls of the Great Palace; whether they were Arab envoys, such as those who arrived in 946 to treat for an exchange of prisoners, and, as the Ceremonies inform us, were greeted with a sumptuous display (largely borrowed from churches) of gold and silver, silks and embroideries, and entertained with a review of the mercenary troops of the Empire (a kind of ancient Selamlık) and an equestrian display in the Hippodrome, or less welcome ambassadors like the unfortunate Liutprand, bishop of Cremona and envoy of the



### BYZANTINE PEASANT LABOURERS

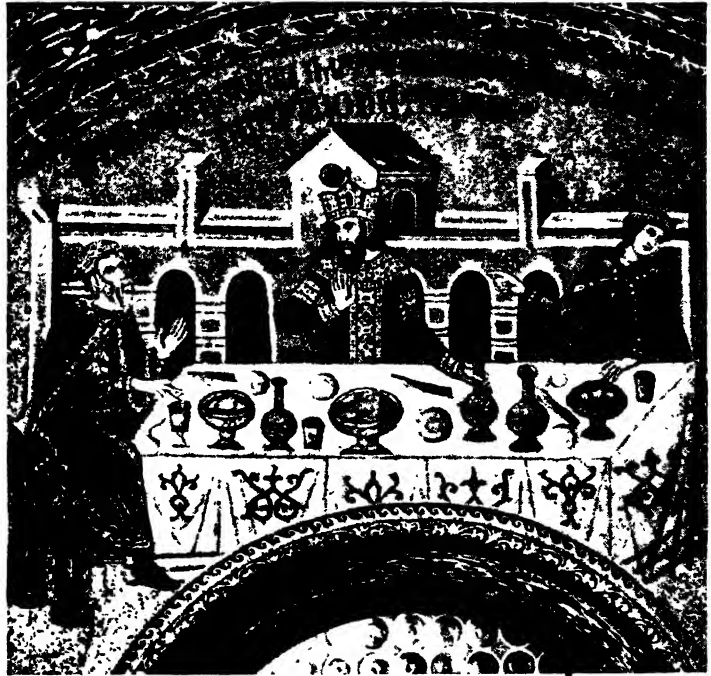
In the Byzantine Empire the land question assumed ominous proportions, culminating in disaster in the eleventh century. The large landowners, employing serf labour, attained a dominating position in the state.

*Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; photo, Archives photographiques*

German emperor Otto I. Liutprand has described very vividly his rough reception, ill-lodging and discourteous treatment in 968 by Nicephorus Phocas, whose anger towards the envoy was the result of the German emperor's aggressions on the Byzantine possessions in Italy.

If half Liutprand's complaints are true, the splendour of the Byzantine court concealed much that was sordid, and the outward etiquette a vast reserve of ill manners. The Bulgarian ambassadors who arrived in Constantinople in 967 were, according to Leo the Deacon, received with actual buffetings. This is the reverse side of the picture of outward magnificence, of mechanical lions which roared and mechanical birds which warbled.

Among the palace entertainments which ambassadors attended, banquets in the Triclinion, the dining hall of the Great Palace, with its nineteen divans, were prominent. At these banquets representatives of all sides of Byzantine upper-class life attended: of the nobility, the army, the civil service, the church and the university. The banquet hall, with its marble columns and floor, gleamed with light from the wax tapers of great silver candelabra. At one end of the hall, on a raised dais, sat the emperor and empress with six (or sometimes twelve) principal guests, and the other divans were ranged on either side of the hall. Choirs from the churches of the Holy Apostles and S. Sophia sang hymns during the feast, and the various courses were brought in on wagons and served on gold plate. Knives and forks were not used, and, as in ancient Rome, washing of the hands was customary between each course. At dessert various entertainers amused the guests, skin-clad dancers from the north, or tumblers and



STATE BANQUET IN THE TRICLINION

The rigid etiquette prescribed in the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* governed every detail of court life at Constantinople. This mosaic, in which Herod and Herodias are portrayed as Byzantine emperor and empress, well suggests the formality of the state banquets, which were a frequent form of entertainment at the palace.

*From S. Mark's Baptistery, Venice; photo, Alinari*

jugglers drawn from Arabia and India. Music, other than sacred, found little approbation among the Byzantines.

Of amusements, besides the displays in the Hippodrome, which have been described in Chapter 85, hunting and fishing were popular imperial recreations. We are told that Romanus II constantly crossed over to the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus to hunt boars in the imperial forests there. Nicephorus Phocas entertained Liutprand to a wild-ass hunt in the imperial park at Brya in Bithynia. A kind of polo, played in the Tzycanisterion (a name which indicates its Persian origin) at Constantinople, was also popular with some emperors.

The part played by women in court life was an important one. The bride of an emperor was sometimes selected, as in the case of Theodora, wife of Theophilus, from a bevy of fair maidens gathered from all parts of the Empire. The women's quarter of the palace was too often the centre of intrigue, and the names of

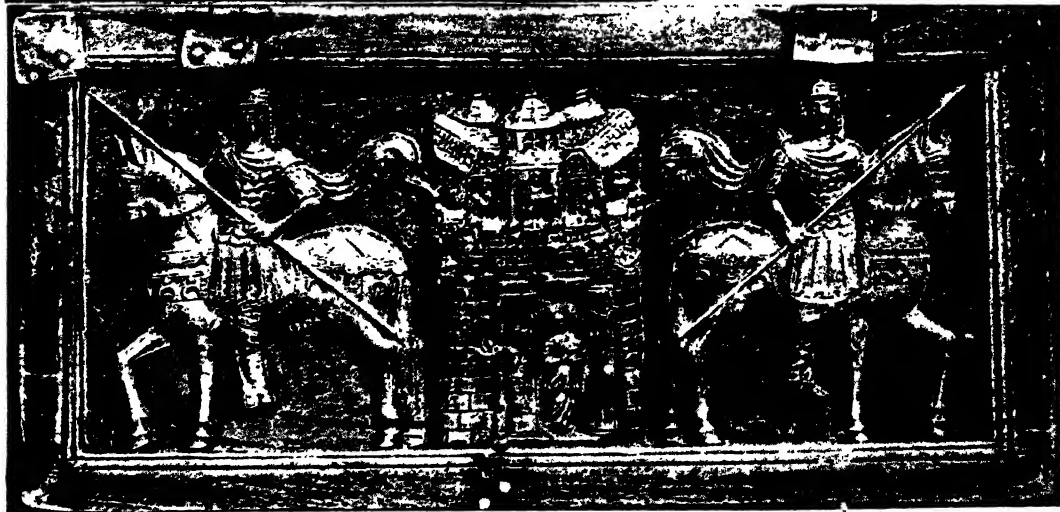
Theodora, wife of Justinian (see Chap. 85), Irene, Theophano, successively wife of Romanus II and Nicephorus Phocas and enamoured of his murderer John Zimisces, and Zoë, wife to three emperors and joint-empress with her sister Theodora, are prominent in Byzantine history.

The empress, in magnificent robes of state, often appeared side by side with the emperor at the principal functions, and is constantly so represented in Byzantine art. Not infrequently these imperial ladies experienced a sudden reversal of fortune, and, like Theophano, were sent to 'live with the angels' in some remote cloister. The eunuchs, who so often rose to positions of eminence in Byzantine life, played no insignificant part in these palace intrigues, as did Stauracius and Aetius in the case of Irene, who imprisoned and blinded her son

Constantine VI. The palace intrigues at Constantinople must often have resembled those of Imperial Rome in the reign of Claudius. 'The wives of the principal officials shared their titles, and were often present at imperial banquets.

The emperor, besides being the head of the army and the civil bureaucracy, was also the head of the Orthodox Church, and that church took, perhaps, the most prominent part of all in Byzantine social life. The strong patriarchs of Constantinople, such as Polyeuctus, could fearlessly confront the emperors, thanks to the support of the people. The religious conflicts of the Empire have often been the subject of scornful criticism. In the fifth century there was the struggle between Alexandria and Constantinople for ecclesiastical supremacy, resulting in the overthrow of Nestorius and the withdrawal of the Nestorians to

Mesopotamia, whence their missionaries carried the Gospel to India and China (see page 2338). The victory of Constantinople at the Council of Chalcedon established the supremacy of the throne over the Church, but at the expense of the withdrawal of the Mono-



OUT AFTER WILD BOAR IN THE IMPERIAL FORESTS

In Troyes Cathedral is an ivory casket dating from the first half of the tenth century, the lid (bottom) and one side of which are reproduced here. The two huntsmen on the former probably represent the same person, possibly Romanus II, and it is to be remarked that an identical head-dress is worn by the figure of doubtful ascription in page 2618. He is known to have been fond of hunting boars, the sport illustrated above, in the imperial preserves on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus.

From Pierce & Tyler, 'Byzantine Art,' Ernest Benn, Ltd.

phésites, who were ultimately absorbed in the Arab conquests of Syria and Egypt.

The most celebrated and instructive of all religious disputes, however, was that concerning images. The Isaurian emperors started this controversy, and it is significant that it was in Asia Minor and Armenia that the most active opponents of the picture-loving monks were to be found. On the other hand Greece was the great home of monastic life, and consequently the centre of the champions of image worship. The causes which induced Leo III and his successors to carry on their crusade against image worship were probably very complex. The desire to remove a reproach at which the followers of Mahomet pointed the finger of scorn was no doubt one of them. Closely allied to this was a wish to eliminate from worship what tended to become a degrading superstition. There is a curious analogy between iconoclasm and puritanism, and the motives at work on either side can be understood by following to-day the arguments of ritualists and anti-ritualists.

It is incontestable that to the less educated mind the visible image is often a help to the realization of things spiritual, and from this standpoint the monks had solid ground for resisting the destruction of images. They were the illustrations, as it were, to the Poor Man's Bible. After a long struggle, lasting for nearly one hundred and fifty years, images were finally restored, and in the form of pictures (icons) have continued a characteristic feature of the Orthodox Church to the present day. No one can doubt that men like John of Damascus and Theodore of Studion were sincere in their upholding of image worship, and they understood the needs of their fellow worshippers better than the image-breaking emperors.



#### BIBLICAL PRECEDENT FOR COURT INTRIGUES

The typical anachronism by which the artist in this mosaic has represented Herodias and Salome in Byzantine court costume is not so inappropriate as it might seem; for women participated freely in the social life of Constantinople and their intrigues more than once affected history profoundly.

*Baptistery of S. Mark's, Venice*

For the outward ceremonies of the Church were dearly prized by the Byzantine populace. Besides the pictures, the churches were full of relics brought from the East, and there were scenes of wild enthusiasm when Heraclius brought back the Holy Cross to Jerusalem in 629 from the Persians, or when Nicephorus Phocas in 967 carried to Constantinople from Aleppo fragments of the tunic said to have belonged to John the Baptist. The emperor and his military and civil train went in solemn procession to the churches on the festival days of the Orthodox Church. Clergy accompanied Byzantine armies with crosses in which fragments of wood believed to have formed parts of the true Cross were inserted. Warlike saints, such as Demetrius, George and Theodore,



and the archangel Michael were reported to have appeared with the Virgin before the final assault on Candia in 961.

It was in vain that the Iconoclast emperors fought to eradicate superstition from a people who devoutly believed that an outbreak of cattle disease was due to the breaking of a marble ox-head in the neighbourhood of the Studion monastery. Yet it must be accounted a sign of strength, inherited from their Roman predecessors, that the Byzantine emperors maintained their supremacy over the Church, and that the victory of the image worshippers did not result in the government of a theocracy.

The Byzantine church is also representative of the Byzantine spirit in its breach with the Western church. It found its interest rather in abstract metaphysical questions than in the pursuit of a personal salvation which has appealed chiefly to the West, and this was the reason why the Orthodox Church attached a real value to the procession of the Holy Spirit, the method of baptism, the date of Easter, the days of fasting and the use of leavened or unleavened bread in the Holy Communion. The Western church, which had nearly lost the knowledge of Greek from the fifth century, lost touch more and more with the Greek mind; and it has been remarked that the prevalence of popes of Greek or Syrian origin between 678 and 715 was due to a desire to understand events in the Eastern church.

The political rivalry between Constantinople and Rome had of course a share in bringing about the breach, but it would

be a mistake to attribute the schism of the ninth century, in the time of Photius, or the final breach of 1054 under Cerularius wholly or even primarily to this cause. The fundamental difference between

the Eastern and Western mind has been the factor which has prevented the success of all subsequent efforts to bring about a fusion of the Eastern and Western churches.

An important product of this mentality of the Byzantines is the rise and spread of monasticism throughout their Empire. The metaphysical vein, which has been described as characteristic of the Eastern mind, found relief in withdrawal from the active affairs of the world and from the domination which the state exercised over the church. Monasticism—chiefly Western—has already been discussed in Chapter 84, but its effects upon Byzantine social life were so far-reaching that it cannot be left out of account in any general study of Byzantinism. Though a S. Basil preached the duty of labour, he favoured a withdrawal from active citizen duties; and throughout the history of the Byzantine Empire there is



'THE EMPRESS'

Notwithstanding some restoration this figure, splendid in purple and lilac and gold, is an unusually pure specimen of Byzantine mosaic. In state robes like these Byzantine empresses held court.

*S. Mark's, Florence; photo, Urogi*

a marked antagonism between those who favoured a practical life and those who favoured asceticism, an antagonism which has its parallel in the hostility of the practical man to the philosopher under the early Roman Empire.

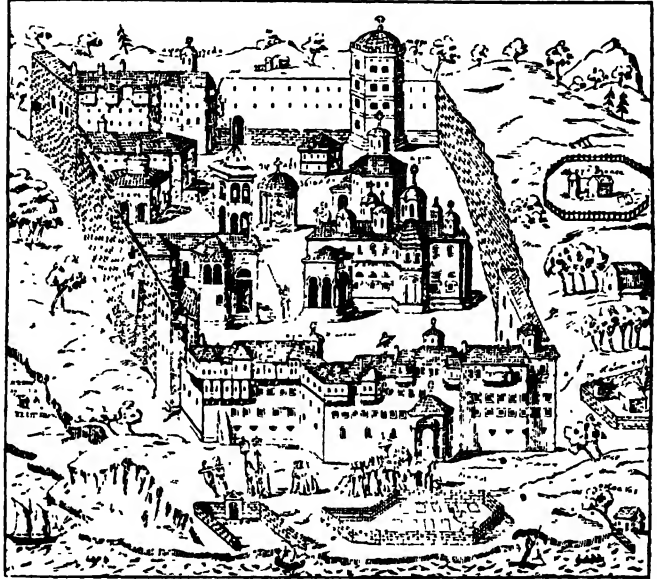
Monasticism was not indeed a peculiar offspring of the Byzantine Empire. It was really the outcome of a tendency inherent in the human heart. Yet the solitary had a special fascination for the Eastern mind, and the extravagant



admiration for a Simeon Stylites in the fifth century could scarcely have been displayed in the West; the anchorites had their specific origin in Egypt, and a Paul and an Anthony are the precursors of the monks of Athos. It is true that the monks, particularly of the great monastery of Studion at Constantinople, by no means confined themselves to passive contemplation; it was they who organized a most vigorous resistance to the Iconoclast emperors.

The chief merit of these institutions is that they kept alive some sort of intellectual tradition and preserved ancient Greek authors by copying them. Their chief defects were that they absorbed lands which would have been more useful in the hands of private owners, that they withdrew men from a life of active usefulness, and too often made them lazy and worthless. The energetic Nice-

phorus Phocas fought against these evils, though without permanent effect; but with an inconsistency thoroughly characteristic of the Byzantine mind this remarkable man founded in 963, through the medium of his favourite monk Athanasius, the Laura, the first of the



#### WHERE MONASTICISM HAS PREVAILED FOR A THOUSAND YEARS

The peninsula of Mount Athos is unique as being the territory of a commonwealth of twenty monasteries, which since 1060 have been independent of the authority of the patriarch of Constantinople. The earliest was the Laura, founded in 963 by Nicephorus Phocas; the latest was founded in 1545. Above is an early engraving of the Laura derived from Byzantine sources, and below a view of the Iveron monastery, founded by Iberians, or Georgians, as it is to-day.

*Above, from Bayet, 'L'art byzantin'; below, photo, G. Millet, Hautes Etudes*



#### BEAUTIFUL BYZANTINE TEXTILES

The silkworm was introduced into the Byzantine Empire in the sixth century, and superb textiles were produced in government factories at Constantinople, Thebes, Alexandria and elsewhere. This sixth-century specimen, representing Samson wrestling with the lion, was probably made at Alexandria.

*Victoria and Albert Museum*

famous monasteries of Mount Athos, with the riches obtained from the storming of Candia.

The story of Theoctista, sister of Plato, the abbot of Saccudion in Bithynia, and mother of Theodore, the abbot of Studion, as told by Diehl, shows with what religious ardour members of well-to-do families embraced the monastic life. The monasteries under Plato and Theodore were conducted with austere piety, but such austerity was by no means universal. Two interesting documents of the twelfth century give us an insight into the conduct of two monasteries in Constantinople. The first is a poem by Prodrômus the Poor, a prolific writer, who appeals for protection to the emperor Manuel Comnenus against the high-handed oppression of the abbots, in this case a father and son, who hold, in defiance of ecclesiastical regulations, a joint sway in the monastery of S. Hilarion. The picture drawn is, with all the allowance

for exaggeration, not a pleasing one, and represents the ruling powers as indulging themselves at the expense of the simple and unprotected monk. Such abuses were probably by no means uncommon in ill regulated communities.

On the other hand the charter of a monastery for women founded by Irene Ducas in the western quarter of Constantinople proves that extreme care was sometimes taken in the conduct of these institutions. The nuns are rigidly guarded from contact with the male sex, and arrangements for meals, sleeping and work are laid down with the nicest precision. The various grades of officers have their duties strictly mapped out for them, and economy is the order of the day. The monastery described with such bitterness by Prodrômus and that founded by the royal lady probably mark two extremes, but experience has

shown that segregation from the rest of his kind is rarely good for man, and the lies and shifts to which Prodrômus was put to catch a glimpse of the outside world no doubt had their parallel in Irene's model foundation. The most useful provision of the latter was the direction for the periodical bestowal of alms at the convent's gate.

Before we proceed to discuss the life of the people, there is an important question upon which we must touch. How far did slavery, which had so great an influence on the social life of Republican and Imperial Rome, continue to exist under the Byzantine Empire? Our information, especially with regard to city life, is defective. That both town and country slaves existed is certain. Slaves are frequently mentioned in Justinian's legislation of the sixth century, and in his Institutes slaves ('servi') are said to have received their name from 'the fact that military com-

manders order their captives to be sold, and in this way usually preserve their lives. Whatever may be thought of the etymology, there is no doubt that the capture of enemies in warfare still continued to be a prolific source of slaves under the Byzantine Empire.

The victorious wars of Nicephorus Phocas, John Zimisces and Basil Bulgaroctonus in the tenth century must have brought numerous slaves in their train, and an Arab historian says that two hundred thousand women and children were brought from Crete alone. It must be remembered, however, that numerous captives were drafted into the Byzantine army. One of the principal articles again in which the Russian traders dealt in their annual visit to Constantinople was slaves, so much so that one etymology has connected the names slaves and Slavs. It may be safely asserted that the menials in most of the large Byzantine houses were slaves, and that their numbers were in many cases large. The famous eunuch chancellor, Basil, who was so prominent in the reigns of Zimisces and Basil Bulgaroctonus, is said to have had three thousand slaves and retainers.

Yet it is probable that ordinary labour in towns was conducted on a system like that introduced by Diocletian, whereby the labourer was bound

**Transition from slave labour to free** to pursue an hereditary calling, but received wages and provided his own keep. This is the system indicated, as we shall see, in the tenth-century Book of the Prefect. The 'Farmer's Law' of the seventh and eighth centuries shows us the free 'colonus' working in his village, and the slave working on the large landed proprietor's estate, but both classes tended to fall into the condition of serfs tied to the soil. Thus the Byzantine Empire marks an important transitional period from slavery to free labour.

We must picture the manual labour, trades and professions at Constantinople as in the hands of hereditary guilds, resembling in some ways the 'collegia' (associations) of the Roman Republic, but much more extensive. They stood quite apart from the official bureaucracy and the hierarchy of the clergy. Besides the

trades necessary to the life of a great city, luxury trades must also have been very flourishing, for all the products of the East streamed into Constantinople.

The silk trade alone would give employment to a very large number, both in the working up of the raw material, and in the actual production of silk after the silk-worm had been introduced into the Byzantine Empire towards the middle of the sixth century (see page 2303). The manufacture of silk was an imperial monopoly, and Thebes in Greece was noted as a flourishing seat of the industry. Merchants must have kept warehouses for their oriental importations, and Byzantine jewelry with its lavish use of precious stones argues a lively trade with India. From the ninth century onwards, furs, honey and wax, in addition to slaves, were imported from Russia. This active trade of the Empire assisted in maintaining the purity of the coinage which continued to be a recognized international standard throughout the history of the Empire, though debasement affected internal economies from the latter part of the eleventh century.

The Byzantine customs system was notoriously strict, as is testified by the tenth-century Book of the Prefect. The most important marine stations for ships coming from or going to the East were at the entrance of the Bosphorus, and at Abydos on the Asiatic side of the narrows of the Dardanelles for trade with the West. Numerous lead seals, which were used by the customs officials, the 'commerciarii,' have survived, and these bear witness to the curious mingling of business and religion so characteristic of Byzantine life. Stamped images of the Virgin accompany a portrait of the emperor, with inscriptions such as 'Holy Virgin, help the Consul John, Strategus and Grand Commerciarius of the Western Customs House.'

Liutprand, the emissary of Otto I, describes the difficulties that he encountered in his dealings with these officials on his departure from the Byzantine Empire. They refused to allow him to take away certain pieces of fine purple stuff on the ground that their export

**Textile industry and luxury trades**



#### BUSINESS AND RELIGION COMBINED

Lead seals, such as this, were largely used by Byzantine customs officials known as *commerciarii*; their official titles were stamped on seals bearing a portrait of the Virgin or other religious image.

*From Schlumberger, 'Un empereur byzantin'*

was prohibited. Flogging was a common punishment for the contravention of customs regulations.

The Prefect's Book, in addition to the light it throws on these regulations, also reveals an elaborate control of the trade guilds. Labour is protected against capital, but the workman is strictly enjoined to remain in his own guild. Prices are fixed for the purchase of raw material and for the sale of food stuffs, the latter a regulation of special importance in times of dearth, which not seldom occurred in the Byzantine Empire. Place and time for the sale of goods by the guilds are prescribed, and severe penalties imposed for contravention. It is clear that the state kept a strict control over industry, and there is no evidence that anything in the shape of modern labour troubles occurred.

Unfortunately we have very little information as to the housing conditions of the mass of the people in ancient Constantinople. Byzantine writers were not interested in such subjects, and little systematic excavation has been possible in the city. Liutprand complains bitterly of the dilapidated condition of the 'palace' in which he was lodged, where he was alternately roasted by the sun and soaked by the rain. Prodrômus in a poem on the sorrows of a literary man, while implying that the ordinary artisan was well housed and well fed, describes his own dwelling as a miserable ruin, and the fears of his relations as to the impending fall of their house remind us of Juvenal's allusion to the frequent collapse of houses in Imperial Rome. It may be conjectured that parts of Stamboul give a fair idea of

the more crowded quarters of ancient Constantinople. The broader thoroughfares, however, permitted the passage of the splendid gilded and silvered carriages of the nobility and officials.

Byzantine law furnishes us with most of our information about family life, though occasionally details of a rather more intimate character are supplied, as in the account of Theoctista's domestic activities. She illustrates the increased liberty accorded to the wife by Byzantine as opposed to Roman law, for she clearly had very great influence over her husband and her children. The absolute rule of the 'patria potestas' was modified, and the view gained ground that husband and wife were equal partners; and the consent of both was required for a child's marriage. The rights of the children too were more carefully guarded, and their disinheritance was restricted to very flagrant cases of breach of filial duty. Orphans were provided for by the institution of public orphanages, and by the right granted to a surviving father or mother to appoint a guardian by will. In all this, and in the increased sanctity attached to marriage, the Church had great influence.

By Justinian's legislation concubinage had been recognized, and the legitimation of the children was rendered possible by a subsequent marriage; divorce had been permitted on a variety of grounds. The Iconoclast emperors no longer recognized concubinage, and restricted grounds of divorce to very flagrant causes, such as leprosy or attempted assassination. The Church forbade a third marriage, and narrowed the degrees of relationship within which marriage could be contracted, and finally insisted on a public ecclesiastical ceremony. It should be noted, however, that under the Macedonian dynasty, starting with Basil I (867-886), there was a reaction towards Justinian's more liberal attitude, but in practice most of the Iconoclastic tendencies were maintained. There can be little doubt that the tone of morality under the Byzantine Empire was much superior to that of the Roman, and for this the influence of the Church is to be thanked.

• Most of our information as to education at Constantinople and in the Byzantine Empire relates to the fourth and fifth centuries. It was then based largely upon the system which had prevailed under the Roman Empire: children were taught reading and writing between the ages of about five and ten years; grammar and literature (including Homer and other Greek poets) between ten and eighteen; and thereafter followed a university education, principally concerned with philosophy based on the works of Aristotle, Plato, Zeno and Epicurus. But Justinian closed the university of Athens in 529, and Phocas that of Constantinople at the beginning of the seventh century. In its stead Heraclius, the successor of Phocas, founded an ecclesiastical school; but this and the following century were the dark age of Byzantine education. In the ninth century there was a revival; the Caesar Bardas reopened the university close to the forum of Theodosius I, and the study of geometry, astronomy and philology was ardently pursued.

This is the age of the encyclopedists, the learning of which is summed up in the patriarch Photius, whose *Bibliotheca* shows an extraordinarily wide range of reading and supplies much information about lost Greek historians, as well as theological writers. In his *Lexicon* he laid the foundation of the Greek etymological lexicons. In the eleventh century Michael Psellus covered all sides of learning, and the vogue of study is well exemplified in the person of the literary princess Anna Comnena—daughter of the emperor Alexius I, and a contemporary of Psellus—whose *Alexiad* teems with quotations from and allusions to classical Greek writers. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that such learning was spread through the mass of the people.

The popular education was mainly theological, and saints and miracles occupied much of the average man's mind. • He was fond of wearing amulets, with perhaps the figure of S. Panteleimon, the all-pitiful medical saint, and an inscription such as: 'God protect the wearer.' He eagerly believed the stories

of miraculous interventions with which the Byzantine chronicles abound. Here, for example, is a passage from the unpublished sixteenth-century world chronicle of Manuel Malaxos, based upon the compilation of Cedrenus (c. 1100). When in 615 a Persian army and fleet appeared before Constantinople, 'in the morning, when the sun rose over the world, the enemy saw issuing from the gate of the Church of the very holy Mother of God at Blachernae a woman exceeding fair and escorted by many soldiers. She was the helper of the helpless, our Lady, the very holy Mother of God, and the soldiers were God's helpers.'

The chronicler very characteristically veils an ignominious peace under a miraculous confounding of the Persians, like that of the Assyrians of old at the hand of the Angel. **General faith of the Lord. To the wonder in Miracles** drous mantle of the Virgin is also attributed the salvation of Constantinople in 860 from the attack of the perhaps legendary princes of Russia, Dir and Askold. Such were the visions which sustained the Byzantine citizen in his round of daily toil. His more tangible distractions were found in the church and in the Hippodrome, varied by the distribution of the imperial largess, and the refreshment of the baths.

The splendour of S. Sophia and of the other churches with which Constantinople teemed must have had considerable influence upon the lives of the inhabitants. S. Sophia was to them, in the words of a chronicler, 'a heaven upon earth, a new Sion, the boast of the universe, the glory of the churches, which surpasses all the buildings of the world.' The internal blaze of colour, the gorgeous vestments of the clergy, of which those of the Orthodox clergy of to-day give an idea, the solemn ritual and above all the singing must have produced a religious frame of mind, if not a spiritual uplifting.

Byzantine hymns and chants as reproduced to-day strike the Western listener at least as somewhat monotonous and melancholy, but they bring with them a religious atmosphere. Some of the most noteworthy Byzantine creations are in hymnology, examples of which are the



**EASTERN BISHOPS IN FULL CANONICALS**

Ecclesiastical vestments have undergone less modification in the course of ages than any other ceremonial costume. Those worn by dignitaries of the Greek Orthodox Church are virtually the same as were worn at Constantinople a thousand years ago.

antiphonal hymns of Romanus belonging to the sixth century, and the Akathistos hymn of the seventh, in which thanks are given for the saving of the Empire under Heraclius from the Avars, or under Constantine IV from the Arabs. The singer ('psalter') was prominent in Byzantine church life; and it may be said, without irreverence, that church festivals, processions and ritual took the place not merely of Roman religious festivals, but also of the theatre of ancient Greece and Rome. The churches also served as places of refuge from the cruelty of the law or the fury of the mob.

The Hippodrome, with its horse-racing and scenes of conflict between the 'Greens' and the 'Blues,' has received treatment in Chapter 85, on Constantinople in the Time of Justinian; but, though the political powers of the factions were broken under Justinian's reign, the amusements of the Hippodrome continued to the end of the period with which we are dealing.

The interludes tended to become more varied, owing to the increasing variety of peoples with whom the Byzantines were brought into contact—the Saracens, Slavs, Khazars and Patzinaks (Petchenegs), whose peculiar customs were made to contribute to the pleasures of the capital. Thus the Arabs furnished jugglers and the peoples of the north their dancers clad in skins of wild beasts, and there were increased opportunities for the exhibition of rare animals.\* There were occasional torchlight dances, and organs, so frequently mentioned in Byzantine literature, made music.

The Hippodrome was, however, the scene of numerous other momentous events in Byzantine life. There many a conspirator, criminal or fallen official was exposed for punishment amid the execrations of the multitude. There expired the victims of the fiendish cruelty of the tyrant Phocas, and there Andronicus I, after suffering inhuman tortures, was hung up by the feet to receive his death-blow.

Many a triumph was celebrated in this famous space. In the Hippodrome the emperor placed his foot upon the neck of the vanquished foe, and Arab or Bulgarian prisoners filed before the throne of a **Celebrations in the Hippodrome** Nicephorus Phocas or a Basil Bulgaroctonus, and prostrated themselves before their conqueror amid the acclamations of the factions and the hymns of the clergy. There the spoils won in war were displayed, and if the emperor was gracious the prisoners might be allowed, after doing homage, to view the games from the steps below the seating-tiers. For the Byzantine emperors were not always cruel to their captured foes, and Arab and Slav prisoners of war often served in the imperial armies.

The public baths also afforded the citizens of Constantinople recreation and relaxation. The Notitia ('survey') of the fifth century informs us that there were then eight public and one hundred and fifty-three private baths in the city. Our archaeological and literary information as to this side of Byzantine life will not compare with that on the baths of ancient Rome. The most famous of the public

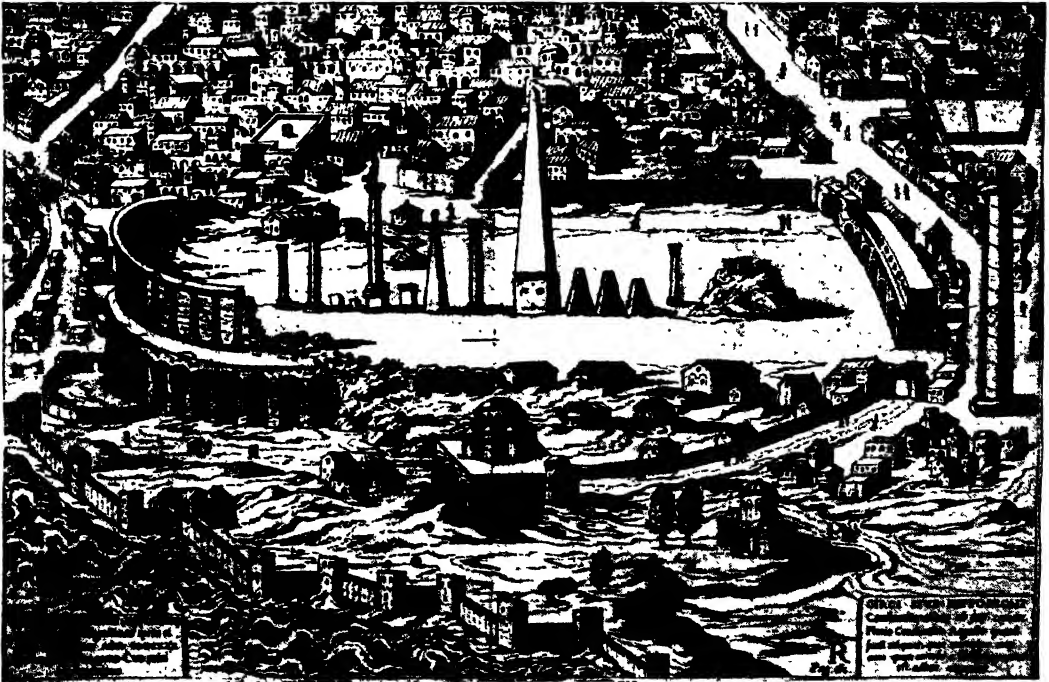
baths of Constantinople were those of Zeuxippus, near the Hippodrome, but the old baths on that site were consumed in the conflagration which followed the outbreak of the Nika riot (see page 2297). We have to infer the popularity of public baths from statements such as that of Prodrômus to the effect that a well-to-do man would take his public bath three times a week.

We gather from the same writer that private baths were something of a luxury, and that the monks in monasteries were severely restricted in this respect. The nuns in the exceptionally well regulated convent of Irene Ducas were allowed a bath only once a month. Constantinople was liberally supplied with water brought in by aqueducts from the west and northwest, and stored in reservoirs and cisterns in the city (see page 2302).

There is one repulsive feature of Byzantine manners which must be touched upon. The history of the Empire teems with

examples of flogging, blinding and mutilations inflicted as penalties. These punishments were recognized both by civil and military law. There are very many instances of such punishments inflicted on members of the highest circles of Byzantine society. The empress Irene blinded her own son Constantine VI in 797; the emperor Justinian II, himself distinguished for his cruelty, had his nose slit on his deposition by the rebel Leontius in 695, and was banished to Cherson. Henceforth known by the sobriquet of 'Nose-Slit' (Rhinotmetus), he was restored again, and, despite his mutilation, reigned from 705 to 711.

It is not surprising that under the influence of such examples in high places the Byzantine mob perpetrated acts of the grossest cruelty. The most glaring instance is the treatment meted out to the fallen Andronicus Comnenus, the handsome but dissolute emperor who had himself condemned countless members of the



THE OLDEST KNOWN PICTURE OF THE CONSTANTINOPLE HIPPODROME

• This print, first published in 1600, but based on an earlier fifteenth-century drawing, shows the appearance of the Hippodrome shortly before the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. Part of the colonnade that enclosed the course stood until 1605. Excavations begun in 1927 have ascertained that the length of the Hippodrome was 485 yards, with a width of 118 yards. Of the monuments along the central spina three still stand in the Atmeidan (see page 2295).

Courtesy of Stanley Casson



high nobility to blinding and execution. At his death the women were foremost in devising ingenuity of torture. But fallen patriarchs and ministers not seldom suffered only a lesser degree of indignity.

Various theories have been advanced to account for this cruel streak in Byzantine character. The constant threats to which the city was exposed at the hands of invaders have been thought to have impaired the nerve fibre of the people. Some have considered that blinding and mutilation were regarded as merciful mitigations of the death penalty, and this theory derives support from the fact that the Christian legislation of the Iconoclasts in many cases substituted mutilation and flogging for the death penalty. A modern generation has seen

that war strain can produce acts of cruelty unimaginable in ordinary times, and the state of tension in which the Byzantines lived may have had its share in fostering cruelty. Yet the ancient world is full of examples of the savage treatment of fallen enemies.

The Romans exercised the greatest cruelty towards their captives and their slaves, and the citizen alone was held exempt from such sufferings. The Byzantines inherited the Roman tradition, and it was grafted on an excitable Greek population. The Greeks of the classical age had had their outbursts of frenzied cruelty—witness the decrees of massacre against the Mitylenaeans and the Melians in the Peloponnesian War (see page 1241). It is scarcely surprising that the Byzantines,

with their blend of Roman imperialism and Greek tradition, often showed the worst features of both, nor is it amiss to remind ourselves that Anglo-Saxon law was long marked by savage and barbarous penalties.

The previous pages of this study have been chiefly occupied with the outstanding features of the Byzantine Empire regarded as a political institution, with the chief classes of people comprised in it, and with their activities and amusements. There are many aspects of this Byzantine life which are open to criticism, and it cannot be denied that, thanks largely to the genius of Gibbon, Byzantinism has become a byword for absolutism, empty ceremonial, barren theological polemics, cruelty and superstition. Some of these charges are true, but most of them could be levelled at any great empire at some period of its history. What is less often considered is the greatness of the debt which modern civilization owes to Byzantinism, and it is the aim of the following pages to set forth



#### BYZANTINE ART IN A RUSSIAN CHURCH

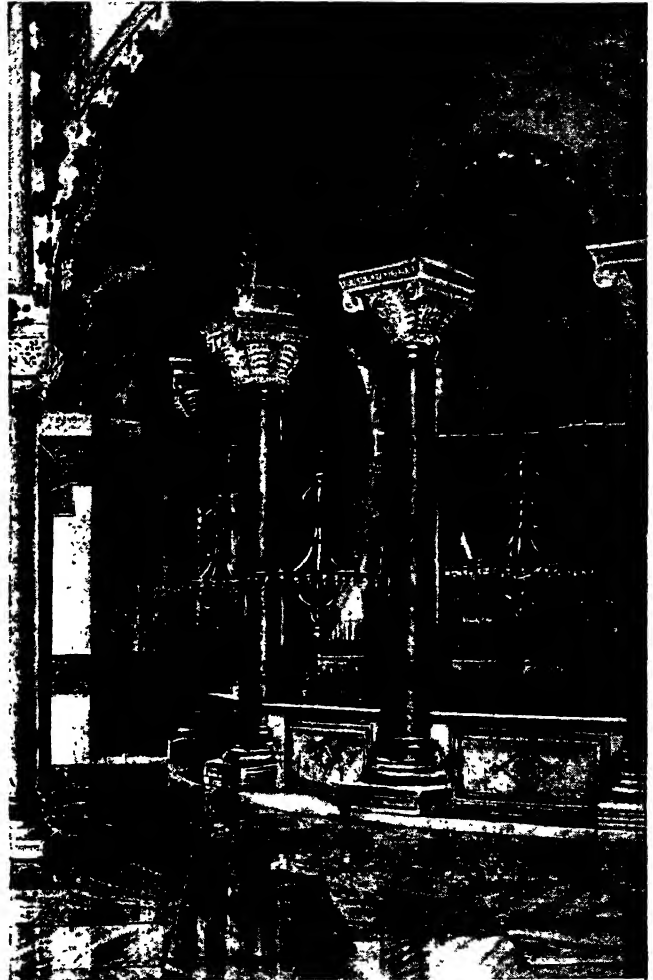
It is to the interior of Greek Orthodox churches that one must turn for the most lavish display of modern Byzantine decoration. In this church at Archangel there is an excess of gaudy, multi-coloured ornament, but the general effect of the carvings, mouldings, mosaics and candelabra is very impressive.

*Photo, P. Brownlow Hughes*

some of the items on the credit side of the account.

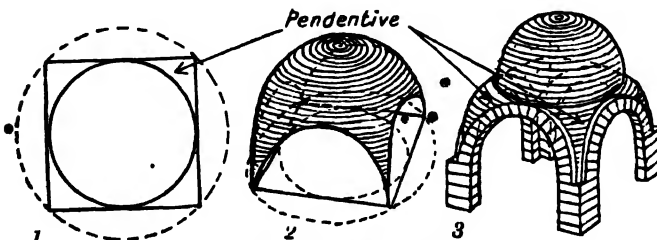
• Byzantium may be said to have fought a continuous battle for existence from the time of her refoandation by Constantine the Great till her capture by Mohammed II in 1453. In the fourth century she successfully pressed back the tide of Gothic invasion which overwhelmed Italy. In the next she staved off—at the price of tribute, it is true—the assaults of the Huns under Attila. In the sixth century she made a spectacular attempt to recover the West, and also had to engage in a series of bitter struggles against Huns, Slavs, Antae and Avars on the line of the Danube, and in the East with the Persians, struggles which extended into the next century marked by the triumphs of Heraclius over the Persians.

Yet another and more formidable foe arose at this time, the Arabs, who overran Syria and Egypt, and were destined to be persistently at war with the Empire. From the eighth to the tenth century there were desperate struggles with the Bulgarians and Russians, to say nothing of the Patzinaks. In the eleventh century the Seljuk Turks appeared, and at the battle of Manzikert



THE GALLERY OF S. SOFIA

S. Sofia (see also page 2300) is the culminating achievement of Byzantine architecture. Externally, its main feature is the huge central dome supplemented by half domes necessitated by the length of the nave. Internally, it is a miracle of spaciousness and lovely curves and multi-coloured marbles.



#### HOW TO ROOF A SQUARE WITH A DOME

• A dome, to cover a square, must overlap it (1), while if the overlapping portions are cut off vertically (2) the dome becomes imperfect. The Byzantines secured a circular base for a perfect dome by slicing off the top of this imperfect one (3), whose remaining sections are known as 'pendentives.'

From Helen Gardner, 'Art Through the Ages'

in 1071 (see page 2514) wrested from the Empire its most flourishing lands in Asia Minor and Armenia. That battle may be described as the death-blow of the Byzantine Empire, for, though it revived for a short time under the Palaeologi after the Latin empire of the crusaders, it was shorn of all its strength and confined to the immediate neighbourhood of the capital.

The capital again and again saw hostile fleets and armies



#### BYZANTINE PORTABLE MOSAIC

Mosaic work like the dome, was an art form adopted by the Byzantines from oriental sources. This bust of our Lord is an unusually large example of portable mosaic made of stone tesserae.

*National Museum, Florence; photo, Alinari*

at its walls. In 668 the Arabs under Moawiya penetrated to Chalcedon, and looked upon Constantinople from across the straits, but were forced to retire. In 717-8 Moslemah blockaded the city by land and sea, but was driven off by Leo's obstinate defence and the terrors of Greek fire. An attack by the Russian prince Igor with over a thousand ships and 40,000 men was beaten off in 941. The city fell to the crusaders in 1203-4, but repelled the first Ottoman assault in 1422.

What might not have been the fate of European civilization if the Moslems had been successful in 717-8? Europe, sheltered by the walls and armies of Constantinople, had time to consolidate herself. When we consider the dangers caused to western Europe by the Ottoman sieges of Vienna in 1529 and 1683, it is not unreasonable to conclude that European history would have taken a very different course if the barrier of Constantinople had been broken down at a far earlier date than 1453. Not undeservedly have the walls of Constantinople

been regarded as a symbol, and have left an indelible impression on the human mind.

It was Constantine who first associated Christianity with the state, and though some, with a different meaning from that of Dante, might be disposed to say :

Ah Constantine! of how much ill was mother  
Not thy conversion, but that marriage  
dower  
Which the first wealthy Father took from thee!

yet, despite all the evils which sprang from the innumerable theological controversies of the Byzantine Empire, the Eastern church has remained faithful to the creeds which her councils laid down,



#### MOSAIC OF THE MADONNA

In their standardisation of Christian types the Byzantine mosaic artists reached perfection. In the Virgin particularly, enthroned or standing in apses, they produced beautiful embodiments of dignity and tenderness.

*Murano Cathedral; photo, Alinari*

and has upheld the Faith amongst masses of men who have found in the Orthodox Church their one uplifting influence. It may be true that she has appealed by her vestments and ceremonies to their emotions rather than to their intellects, but no one can deny her efforts to keep alive the spirit of Greek freedom.

In their struggle with the Iconoclast emperors the Greek clergy and monks really did great service in placing a check upon absolute autocracy, and the universality of canon law was an element of stability with which the Empire could have ill dispensed. This tradition the Greek Church carried on into later times, and the clergy were foremost in the opposition to the Turks. In the war of Greek independence many a brave and patriotic abbot cheered on his fellow countrymen to continue the struggle with the enemy.

But the Byzantine church was also a missionary church. The time of Justinian was one of great missionary activity. Greek missionaries worked amongst the Heruli of the town that was later to be Belgrade, the Huns to the north of the Black Sea and the peoples of the Caucasus. On the African continent the dwellers in the Sahara oases were won for Christ; a bishop was sent to southern Arabia, where the Christians had been persecuted by the Jewish king Dhu Nuwas; the conversion of the Nubians was begun by Julian, an Alexandrian cleric, and continued later by bishop Longinus. The Abyssinian church (see page 2341) remains to the present day to testify to the monophysite zeal of the Christians of Alexandria. Nor should it be forgotten that the great founder of the English church system was a Greek, Theodore of Tarsus, appointed archbishop of Canterbury in 668, of whom Bede says: 'He was the first archbishop whom all the English church obeyed.' England



WESTMINSTER'S BYZANTINE CHURCH

Westminster Cathedral, built between 1895 and 1903, is the finest example in England of architecture in the Byzantine style. It is a vast structure of variegated brickwork measuring internally 342 by 149 feet and 112 in height within the domes. Externally, its main feature is the campanile, 284 feet high.

*Photo, Campbell*

also owes him a debt of gratitude for his encouragement of learning.

In the ninth century, in the time of Photius, Greek missionaries carried the Gospel to the Moravians and the Bulgarians, and the latter, under their czar Boris, adopted the Orthodox faith. These missionaries were the famous brothers Methodius and Cyril, and it was by Cyril that the Glagolitic script (see page 1062) was invented, the precursor of the Cyrillic script now used by the Slav peoples. Cyril's translation of the Scriptures into the Slav dialect opened the way for Russian literature. In the tenth century Christianity made much progress in the Russian state; Kiev was its centre, and its queen Olga is said to have been baptised on her visit to Constantinople in 956-7. The most significant of early Russian conversions, however, was that



#### BOOK PRODUCTION IN PERFECTION

In the illumination of manuscripts Byzantine artists have not been surpassed. This page from the twelfth-century psalter of Melisande, wife of Fulk, king of Jerusalem, is typical in its beautiful colours, symmetrical grouping of the figures, and attention to detail. The psalter is bound in carved ivory.

*British Museum; Egerton MSS., 1139*

of Prince Vladimir, who was baptised in 989, and who married the Byzantine princess Anna.

The Russian church thus founded was based on the Greek Orthodox Church. Russian ecclesiastical life was modelled on the Byzantine, and its metropolitan was at first appointed by the patriarch of Constantinople. Such church organization as the Revolution of 1917 has left to Russia is derived from the Greek Orthodox Church. Another Slav people, the Serbian, has also inherited Greek orthodoxy; it was the work of Stephen Nemanya at the end of the twelfth century to establish the supremacy of that church.

It is no mean heritage that the Byzantine church has left to the present time.

The patriarch at Constantinople has spiritual authority over the Greek Christians in the Turkish dominions; and the Hellenic Republic, Rumania, Jugoslavica and Russia all derive their church organization from the Greek Orthodox Church.

Closely allied to the spiritual debt which the modern world owes to Byzantium is the debt to her civilization. On the literary side, Byzantine ecclesiastical literature had a profound influence on the literature of the peoples with whom she was brought into contact. In the fifth century, under Theodosius II, the Byzantines welcomed two Armenians named Mesrob and Sahak, who had translated the Scriptures into their native tongue, and had fled into Byzantine territory to escape the persecution of the Persians. These two men laid the foundations of an Armenian translation literature, which was entirely dependent on the Greek. The Bulgarians in the age of their tsar Simeon (892-927) were permeated with Greek culture, and many Greek works, such as the Chronicle of Malalas, Athanasius against the Arians, and the Hexa-

meron of John of Damascus, were translated into the Slav language. Simeon himself translated extracts from the works of John Chrysostom under the title of the Golden Book. After the dark period caused by the conquests of Basil II, Bulgaria revived and developed a further translation literature from the Greek.

Early Russian literature is the product of two factors, the one Scandinavian, connected with the sagas and the immigration of the Norsemen into Russia in the ninth century, and the other Byzantine ecclesiastical influence. The baptism of Vladimir brought Russia definitely within the sphere of the Orthodox Church, and its ecclesiastical literature, though received through Bulgaria, is, like its liturgy,

definitely Greek. The schism between the Eastern and Western churches in the eleventh century finally determined Russia's ecclesiastical leaning, and contributed much to shutting her out from Western influences.\* Another Slav people, the Serbs, also developed in the twelfth century, with Bulgarian translations as intermediaries, an ecclesiastical literature based on that of the Byzantines. Mysticism and asceticism predominate, and in Serbia, as in Russia, monasticism played an important part.

But literature was not the only channel through which Byzantium influenced the Slav peoples. Her architects and painters carried the Empire's civil and ecclesiastical architecture and decoration into the palaces and churches of Prespa and Ochrida, Kiev and Novi-Bazar. Court ceremony and costume from Constantinople were adopted by the monarchs of the Slav countries, and their official bureaucracies were modelled on those of Byzantium. Thus it is that at the present day Russia, Jugo-Slavia, Bulgaria and Rumania, and, it may be added, Turkey, cannot be understood without a realization of their debt to Byzantium.

Byzantine trade naturally affected these countries, making it possible for them to obtain the luxurious wares of the East. It is of the trade, however, between Russia and Constantinople that we have most knowledge. Every spring a trade expedition set out from Kiev, down the Dnieper in boats hollowed from a single tree trunk ('monoxylons'—see page

2477), bound for Constantinople via the Black Sea. It was a voyage rendered both difficult and dangerous owing to the rapids of the river and the hostility of the Patzinaks and Khazars, through whose territory the merchants had to pass.

\* These Russian traders, who brought with them skins, wax, honey and slaves; were accorded privileges by the Byzantine government, and were allowed a special emporium at St. Mamas at the bottom of the Golden Horn. Yet as a precaution

they were only allowed to enter through one gate; and not more than fifty at a time were admitted. They were exempted from tolls and granted free board, and on their return were supplied with tackle necessary for the refitting of their boats. In this way Eastern wares penetrated to the Russians, who in their turn did the Empire service by protecting it from the attacks of barbarian tribes, and further from the ninth to the eleventh century provided troops which served in the Byzantine army and navy, and were included in the Varangian guard.

The Byzantine and Arab empires acted and reacted upon each other in matters of civilization, and especially in the pursuit of science and in military organization. The Arabs received instruction in philosophy and medicine from Constantinople through Syria, and the court of Bagdad was profoundly influenced by Greek learning, particularly by the writings of Aristotle. An alliance was actually



EARLY IVORY CARVING

Byzantine ivory carving reached its zenith in the tenth century. This panel of S. Michael, however, remarkable for its size and superb modelling, dates from the fifth.

British Museum; photo, Mansell

made with the Fatimids of Africa in 917, and the splendid reception accorded to Arab envoys in 946 has already been alluded to. It is striking evidence of the mutual toleration shown that the Moslems were allowed a mosque in Constantinople.

One of the greatest of the debts which the world owes to the Byzantine Empire is on the score of its conservation of ancient Greek literature and of the Greek language. The study of Greek classical literature never really died out at Constantinople, and a work like the *Alexiad* of the princess Anna Comnena is proof of its effect on a literary work of the twelfth century, both in matter and style. Theodore, as head of the Studion monastery about 800, was zealous in preserving and multiplying Greek manuscripts. The names of Photius and Arethas stand out as conservers of classical literature, and those of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Suidas, Psellus, Tzetzes and Eustathius are also to be honoured.

They are indispensable links in the chain which unites Alexandrian and modern scholarship. The revival of Greek learning in Europe depended on their work and the work of others like them, and a Manuel Chrysoloras and a Bessarion could not have awakened a love of Greek in Italy unless the Byzantine Empire had preserved the manuscripts of Greek classics in its monasteries and its libraries. The Byzantine scholars exiled after 1453 gave to the West, which in the sack of 1204 had done so much destruction, a key to enlightenment which it hardly deserved.

The influence of Byzantine architecture upon that of Russia, Bulgaria and Serbia has been very great, so that a brief estimate

of Byzantine architecture and art as a whole would not be out of place here. The two branches are closely allied, for each was inspired mainly by religion. The artist spent much of his skill upon the mosaic decorations which adorn the architect's churches, and the majority of the smaller artistic products for which Byzantine art is justly famous were inspired by the religion which produced its churches.

The Roman architects developed the arch, the vault and the apse; the Byzantines developed the dome, though this had, of course, been employed by the Romans in such a building as the Pantheon (page 1917), where the material used was concrete. Churches based on the Roman basilica were built in Constantinople, but the cruciform church with domes became the favourite type, and the venerable Church of the Holy Apostles was rebuilt by Justinian in this style. It was the popularity of the dome, probably due to Oriental influence, which led to the essentially Byzantine device of the pendentive, a spherical triangle used for filling out the segments lying between the square plan of the pillars and the

circle of the dome (page 2635). This device is best exemplified in S. Sophia, and it is significant that both its architects, Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus, came from Asia Minor; the interior decoration schemes in brightly coloured mosaics are also an Eastern feature. The mosaic wall-decorations of



**A UNIQUE STATUETTE**

Statue making was almost entirely neglected by the Byzantines, who preferred relief. This, eleventh-century statuette of the Virgin is the only known late Byzantine ivory carving in the round.

*Victoria and Albert Museum*



Byzantine churches, devoted to Christ and the Virgin, to apostles and saints, emphasise the Christian character of the architecture.

Under the Macedonian dynasty a new feature was introduced in the adornment of the outer walls of the churches with coloured brick and marble. The general effect of Byzantine church architecture can to some extent be judged from the appearance of the beautiful Greek church in Moscow Road and of Westminster Cathedral, in London ; but it must be remembered that the English climate is not favourable to colour.

The Byzantine artists excelled in the illumination of manuscripts, and in their small works in ivory, precious metals and jewelry. The illuminator's art was carried to a high degree of perfection, and

Byzantine manuscripts are unsurpassed for minute attention to detail and brilliant colouring. They also show what care was devoted to portraiture, and often give valuable evidence for the appearance of the varied peoples with whom the Empire was brought into contact. We can realize that the Iconoclasts in their campaign against the pictures seemed to the lay and monkish artists to threaten not merely religion, but also an employment which depended on the popularity



• **ART IN THE SERVICE OF RELIGION**

Byzantine artists devoted their highest skill to the adornment of articles of ecclesiastical use. Some of the chalices were particularly beautiful objects. The best examples are in the treasury of S. Mark's, Venice. Here we have (top) a twelfth-century carved crystal cup mounted in silver gilt with two handles, and (left) an onyx and (right) a chalcedony hemispherical cup set in silver gilt with enamelled plaques and mounted on stands. Both these are tenth-eleventh century work.

*S. Mark's, Venice ; photos, Alinari*

of pictures for its existence. If the reader refers to good examples of Byzantine art he will realize the skill of the Byzantine artists, and will not be likely to leave them with the impression that their art was childish or feeble. The jewelry, on account of the Byzantine fondness for precious stones, is Eastern in character, and carries on the traditions of the later Roman jewelry.

To sum up the characteristics of the Byzantine Empire in a few lines is an almost impossible task, yet it is worth while to recall some of its salient features. The Eastern Empire drew upon the heritage of Imperial Rome, and her emperors proudly arrogated to themselves that world sway to which ancient Rome could once lay claim with truth, but which passed away with the transference of the capital to Constantinople. It could have claimed, perhaps with greater justification, to be the inheritor

of the traditions of Alexander's Empire, for much of Byzantinism is Hellenistic Greek in spirit.

But these legacies from Hellenism and Roman imperialism were modified by countless new influences. The Persians, Arabs and Slavs, and the other peoples about whom Constantine Porphyrogenitus has so much to say in his work on The Administration of the Empire, all had their share in impressing

new features on Byzantine life, but Constantinople gave more than she received. Christianity, so closely identified with the state, was, after all, the dominating influence on Byzantine life, and missionary zeal spread the Gospel from the oases of the Sahara to the banks of the Dnieper. The Bulgarians, Russians and Serbs adopted the court ceremonial and architecture of Constantinople; her ecclesiastical literature penetrated to Armenia on the east and to Serbia on the west. To the Arabs she opened up the treasures of ancient Greek science and philosophy.

**Civilization's debt to Byzantinism**

From western Europe she received but little of permanent value, and the crusaders came mainly to destroy. But though she received little she gave much. Her architecture left its mark on Venice, and has impressed its traces farther west. But it is to her conservation of the treasures of ancient Greek literature, and to her resistance to the disruptive forces of North and East during so many centuries, that western Europe owes most; those who profess and call themselves Christians should be thankful for her upholding of the Christian faith amid appalling dangers and difficulties. Her monasteries may be open to many criticisms, but they multiplied manuscripts and set an example of charity to the poor. It was in Constantinople that the Christian spirit first took practical shape in the founding of charitable institutions, hospitals for the sick, homes for the aged and orphanages for children. The Eastern Orthodox Church has steadfastly maintained its ideals, and it is no exaggeration to say that the Church has had a foremost share in the redemption of Greece and the Balkan peoples from the Turkish yoke.

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**PORTRAIT IN PORPHYRY**

Although the subject cannot be identified, this porphyry head—it bears resemblance to that of Romanus II—in page 2618—is clearly an example of Byzantine portraiture. Experts attribute this work to the first half of the tenth century.

*St. Mark's, Venice; photo, Anderson*

# *Fifth Era*

## THE CRUSADING ERA

1073—1303

### Chronicle XVIII—THE CLASH OF EAST AND WEST, 1073-1152

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### Chronicle XIX—EAST AND WEST: CONFLICT AND INTERCOURSE, 1152-1216

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| <p>106. The Italy of Guelph and Ghibelline<br/><i>Prof. E. G. Gardner</i></p> <p>107. Social Life in Medieval Rome<br/><i>Rt. Hon. Sir Rennell Rodd, G.C.B.</i></p> | <p>108. Empire of the Seljuk Turks<br/><i>Prof. Sir E. Denison Ross, C.I.E., Ph.D.</i></p> <p>109. Spirit and Influence of the Crusades<br/><i>Prof. W. B. Stevenson, D. Litt.</i></p> |
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**A**LTHOUGH the Byzantine state, under Greek or 'Latin' emperors, lingered until its destruction by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, what really gave it its death-blow was the loss of Asia Minor to the Seljuks at the battle of Manzikert in 1071; and it was these Seljuks who, by reversing the normal Mahomedan principle of toleration to Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land, made it possible for the Byzantine emperor to enlist the sympathy of the Western nations and set them crusading. Again, it was the election of Hildebrand as Pope Gregory VII in 1073, two years after Manzikert, that marked the rise of the Papacy to the greatest height of power and prestige ever attained by it, a prestige that enabled Pope Urban to organize the First Crusade in 1095 as the outward expression of an apparently united Christendom. Again, it was the crusaders who in the event gave its second death-blow, so to speak, to Byzantinism when the so-called Fourth Crusade captured Constantinople in 1204 and established the short-lived Latin Empire. And finally the Crusades, by promoting a renewed contact between East and West, had an economic and cultural significance that far outweighed their apparent political futility. Events of world importance

## Note on The Crusading Era

which it would be hard to link up with this nexus of facts took place in India and China throughout the period, but the foregoing is the justification for fixing 1073 as the date at which to terminate The Byzantine Era, and choosing The

Crusading Era as the title of the one that here ensues. It extends to 1303, in which year the capture of Boniface at Anagni marked the end of papal pretensions, the last Christian fortress in Syria having fallen to the Saracens twelve years earlier.

## TABLE OF DATES FOR CHRONICLE XVIII

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| <p>1073 Hildebrand elected pope as Gregory VII.<br/>Henry IV occupied with the Saxons.<br/>Sulayman captures Nicaea.</p> <p>1075 Henry IV defeats the Saxons.<br/>Gregory issues decree against lay investiture.<br/>Henry declares Gregory deposed. Gregory excommunicates Henry and declares him deposed.</p> <p>1076 Seljuk Turks seize Jerusalem.<br/>German nobles and prelates turn against Henry.<br/>Canossa; submission and humiliation of Henry.<br/>Election of Rudolf of Swabia, followed by German reaction in Henry's favour.<br/>Sultanate of Roum established at Nicaea by Sulayman.</p> <p>1078 Nicephorus II deposes Michael VII Ducas.</p> <p>1079 Gregory again excommunicates Henry.</p> <p>1080 Death of Rudolf breaks up the German rebellion though Saxons elect Herman of Luxemburg.<br/>Henry sets up antipope Clement III.</p> <p>1081 Alexius I Comnenus deposes Nicephorus. Comneni rule for a century.<br/>Robert Guiscard besieges Durazzo and defeats Byzantines.<br/>Henry IV invades Italy and besieges Gregory in Rome.</p> <p>1082 Henry occupies the Leonige City at Rome.</p> <p>1083 Henry occupies Rome; Gregory holds out in the castle of S. Angelo.</p> <p>1084 Henry IV is crowned at Rome by Clement. Robert Guiscard returns from Macedonia, raises the siege of S. Angelo, sacks Rome, and retires. Gregory follows him to Salerno.</p> <p>1085 Death of Gregory (May) and of Guiscard (June).<br/>Robert succeeded as duke of Apulia by his son Roger; Bohemund count of Otranto withdraws Normans to Italy.<br/>Alfonso VI of Castile captures Toledo.<br/>England: the Domesday Survey.</p> <p>1086 Victor III pope.<br/>Alfonso is defeated at Zalaca by the Almoravid Yussuf; who establishes the Almoravid ascendancy in S. Spain (1086-98).</p> <p>1087 England: William Rufus succeeds the Conqueror.</p> <p>1088 Urban II pope.</p> <p>1089 Sultan Malik Shah dies. Wars of succession.</p> <p>1090 Rebellion of Henry's elder son Conrad.</p> <p>1091 Alexius appeals to Urban at Council of Piacenza (March). The First Crusade proclaimed at Council of Clermont (November).</p> <p>1092 Crusaders assemble at Constantinople (Dec.).</p> <p>1093 Crusaders invade Asia Minor, take Nicaea, drive Killij Arslan to Iconium, which becomes the capital of Roum, cross the Taurus, secure Edessa and besiege Antioch.</p> <p>1094 Crusaders take Antioch. Fatimids recapture Jerusalem from Seljuks.</p> <p>1095 Crusaders capture Jerusalem (July). Beginning of the 'Latin Kingdom' under Godfrey of Bouillon with title Advocate of Jerusalem.<br/>Death of Ruy Diaz (Cid Campeador).<br/>Henry IV has his second son Henry V crowned.<br/>Death of Urban. Paschal II pope.</p> <p>1100 Baldwin I succeeds his brother Godfrey at Jerusalem, with title of king. Organization of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem with feudatory princes at Edessa, Antioch and Tripolis; the typical feudal state.<br/>England: accession of Henry I (to 1135).<br/>Death of antipope Clement ends schism.</p> <p>1101 Deaths of Conrad and Roger I (count) of Sicily.</p> <p>1102 Revolt of Henry V against Henry IV.</p> <p>1103 Death of Henry IV. Henry V maintains quarrel with Paschal.<br/>Henry I of England secures Normandy by defeating his elder brother Duke Robert at Tenchebrai.</p> | <p>1107 English settlement of investiture question.</p> <p>1108 France: accession of Louis VI the Fat.<br/>Hungarian war of Henry V.</p> <p>1111 Henry V in Italy. Paschal resigns temporalities and then other claims; crowns Henry V.<br/>Death of Roger of Apulia; William succeeds.</p> <p>1112 Paschal repudiates his pledges. Series of revolts (1112-18) in Germany.</p> <p>1118 Death of Paschal II.</p> <p>1119 Sanjar Seljuk sultan (to 1159).<br/>Calixtus II pope.<br/>Alfonso I of Aragon wins Saragossa.<br/>John II succeeds Alexius at Constantinople.<br/>Baldwin II (cousin) succeeds Baldwin I.</p> <p>1122 Concordat of Worms ends investiture dispute.</p> <p>1124 Calixtus dies; Honorius II pope.<br/>Scotland: accession of David I (to 1153).</p> <p>1125 Death of Henry V. Lothair of Saxony elected emperor. Rivalry of Welf and Weiblingen.</p> <p>1127 Roger II of Sicily succeeds William of Apulia and extends dominion over South Italy.<br/>The Turk Zanghi made 'atabeg' of Mosul.<br/>Institution of the Order of Knights Templars.</p> <p>1129 Matilda (Empress Maud) d. of Henry I of England m. Geoffrey son of Fulk of Anjou.</p> <p>1130 Fulk of Anjou (son-in-law) succeeds Baldwin II.<br/>Election of rival popes Anacletus II and Innocent II.<br/>Papal schism to 1138.</p> <p>1131 Bernard of Clairvaux and emperor Lothair support Innocent.</p> <p>1132 Lothair campaigns against Roger II in Apulia.</p> <p>1134 Lothair reconciled with Hohenstaufen. Anacletus recognizes Roger as 'king' of Sicily.</p> <p>1135 England: accession of Stephen of Blois; succession claimed by Empress Maud; eighteen years of civil war and feudal anarchy.</p> <p>1137 Quarrel of Lothair and Innocent. Death of Lothair (December).<br/>Accession of Louis VII after marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine.</p> <p>1138 Conrad III (Hohenstaufen) elected emperor.<br/>Innocent attacks and is taken prisoner by Roger, who extorts recognition as king of Sicily, officially 'held of the pope.'</p> <p>1139 Henry the Proud (Welf) deprived of Saxony and Bavaria.<br/>Alfonso Henriques, count of Porto Cale, defeats Moors at Ouriques, and is first king of Portugal.</p> <p>1141 Defeat of Sultan Sanjar by Kara-Khitaïs.</p> <p>1142 Henry the Lion (Welf) restored in Saxony. Albert the Bear established in Mark of Brandenburg.</p> <p>1143 Manuel I succeeds John II at Constantinople.<br/>Baldwin III (minor) succeeds Fulk at Jerusalem.</p> <p>1144 Zanghi of Mosul takes Edessa.</p> <p>1145-49 Struggle in Spain between Almoravids and Almohades who win the supremacy.</p> <p>1146 Zanghi succeeded at Mosul by Nour ed-Din.<br/>Bernard of Clairvaux preaches a new Crusade.<br/>Louis VII and Conrad III take the Cross (the 'Second Crusade').</p> <p>1147 Conrad and Louis in Asia Minor.</p> <p>1148 Collapse of the Second Crusade.</p> <p>1149 Advance of Sancho IX of Castile in central Spain, signalised by the establishment of a Cistercian monastery at Calatrava.</p> <p>1150 Union of Catalonia with Aragon through the marriage of Count Raymond Berengar of Barcelona to Petronilla the heiress of Aragon.</p> <p>1151 Dissolution of marriage between Louis VII and Eleanor of Aquitaine.</p> <p>1152 Marriage of Eleanor to Henry Plantagenet of Anjou and Normandy, son of Empress Maud.<br/>Conrad III dies. Election of Frederick I Barbarossa of Swabia and Hohenstaufen.</p> |
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## Chronicle XVIII

# THE CLASH OF EAST AND WEST: 1073—1152

**I**N the third quarter of the eleventh century two features presented themselves which are of first-rate importance in the history of the coming age. In Asia, Islam fell under the military domination of the Turks; and in Europe the Papacy, under the guidance of Archdeacon Hildebrand, was making ready to assert the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal power in the Christian world.

Of these, the second inaugurated a prolonged conflict between a single authority claiming to be universally absolute and the several authorities, imperial or royal, which claimed to be territorially absolute, affecting the development of every state in Europe; and the first was the immediate cause of the renewed clash between the Oriental and the Western worlds which warrants the titles of our Fifth Era and of the present Chronicle.

### The Seljuk Turks in Syria

**N**OW for three centuries and a half, since the triumphs of Leo the Iconoclast and Charles Martel, Mahomedanism had made no progress against Christianity; and Saracens had made no progress against Europeans, save for occasional thrusts into Asia Minor when the Eastern Empire was in a particularly demoralised state, the Aglabid conquest of Sicily, and the piratical occupation of territory in South Italy that technically pertained to Byzantium; they had already been cleared out of Italy, were in process of being cleared out of Sicily, and were being continuously pressed farther south in Spain. The boundaries of the Eastern Empire were still intact, when the Turks broke into Asia Minor and established themselves there by the victory of Manzikert (page 2514). The sultan Alp Arslan was assassinated in 1072. The new Seljuk sultan, Malik Shah, left Asia Minor to his general, Sulayman, who captured Nicaea in 1073 and made it the capital of an independent

kingdom of Roum (i.e. Rome), to be obviously the centre of a permanent menace to Constantinople; though according to Turkish custom there was no attempt to supply the conquered territory with a political organization. The sultan's attention being mainly fixed on the Farther East, other Seljuk generals were engaged in bringing Syria, which had long ignored Bagdad, into the Seljuk obedience. In 1076 Seljuk troops captured Jerusalem.

### Reasons for the First Crusade

**T**HE Holy Land had passed into the hands of successive Mahomedan factions, Egyptian or Syrian, many times since its first conquest by the second khalif, Omar. Those vicissitudes had occasioned no change in Christian sentiment. The Mahomedans with rare exceptions had respected the Christian feeling for the holy places and given protection to the pious pilgrims from the West who came to pay their devotions. But the Turks had no such reverence for the piety of the infidel. In the few years during which they lorded it in Palestine the pilgrims were subjected to perils and their faith to insults such as they had never experienced from the Arabs.

Malik Shah died in 1092; the Seljuk chiefs were immediately involved in a prolonged faction fight between claimants to the succession; but before the Egyptian Fatimids seized their opportunity to recover possession of Jerusalem in 1098 the mischief was done. The astute emperor at Constantinople had been provided with that exciting appeal to religious sentiment which was just what he wanted to sting the West into activity. The astute pope—no aspersion on his sincerity is implied—standing forth as the champion of the Cross, would become by the mere fact the undisputed leader of Christendom in a fashion impossible for any lay potentate then living.

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The result was the First Crusade, and from the first the rest followed. The tales of the pilgrims who had seen and suffered under the Turkish regime gave life to the idea that the Saracen was the enemy of the Cross, and that it was the duty of good Christians to redeem from his sway the soil made sacred by the footprints of the Redeemer; and the tales of the pilgrims were very thoroughly exploited not only by sincere religious enthusiasts, but by all who hoped to turn religious enthusiasm to account for the furtherance of their own interests or their own ambitions.

But before proceeding with the story of the Crusade we must review the developments taking place in western Europe and at Constantinople between the battle of Manzikert and the congress at Clermont, where the Crusade was inaugurated.

**W**HEN Pope Alexander II died in 1073, the duke of Normandy was undisputed king of England. The last English revolt against the alien dynasty had been suppressed. Beside him stood the able statesman-archbishop Lanfranc, and those two saw always eye to eye. The Church in England was being brought under the new ecclesiastical discipline; the king gave Lanfranc a very free hand and very large powers, knowing that he was far too

wise to use them to the detriment of the crown's prerogative.

The Church was ruled mainly by Norman bishops and abbots, the country by Norman barons. But the barons were not the lords of provinces; their estates were dispersed over widely separate districts, and their vassals were the king's vassals; and they, with the great ecclesiastics, formed the Great Council of the realm which the king consulted when he thought fit. William could with perfect safety pass much more of his time in his Norman duchy than in his English kingdom. The duchy, when he died (1087), was to pass to his eldest son, Robert, the kingdom to the second son, William Rufus.

In France, William's overlord was the young king Philip 'the Gross,' dissolute, lethargic, crafty; having little enough control over his feudatories, but an immense capacity for turning their feuds to the advantage of the crown. For practically he was only one—to whom the rest owed a very dubious allegiance—among several princes ruling their own principalities, each of whom was individually as powerful as he: hereditary dukes or counts of Normandy, Blois, Champagne, Toulouse, Brittany, Flanders, whose vassals would follow their banners against the king himself. And he had not that



### LANFRANC'S SIGNATURE APPENDED TO A STATE DOCUMENT OF THE CONQUEROR

William's ablest partner was Lanfranc, whom he made archbishop of Canterbury; he was as successful in bringing the Church under Norman discipline as William on the civil side. At the foot of a document granting the primacy of England to the see of Canterbury his signature appears, first in the left-hand column beneath the crosses of the king and queen; compare his neat calligraphy with the more antiquated hand of Wulfstan, Saxon archbishop of Worcester, last in the same column.

*By permission of Dr. Samuel Buckersteth, Chapter Library, Canterbury*

## The Clash of East and West

piety, genuine or assumed, which alone might have condoned his immoralities in the eyes of the clergy and brought them into alliance with him; for the French monasteries were the nurseries of the most zealous of the reforming churchmen. Philip's cunning might prepare the way for his successors to assert the power of the crown, but he was not the man to do it himself.

In Spain the Córdoba khalifate had fallen early in the century. Moorish Spain was split into a number of emirates; Christian Spain, united for a time under Sancho the Great of Navarre, fell asunder on his death in 1035 into the four separate kingdoms of Navarre, Castile, Leon and Aragon on the upper Ebro, and the county of Barcelona (the Spanish March) between the Pyrenees and the lower Ebro. Christians warred with Moors, emirs with emirs, kings with kings, Saracen and Spaniard in occasional temporary combinations, till in 1072 Leon and Castile were again united under Alfonso VI. To the ensuing period belong most of the exploits of that somewhat dubious 'national hero,' Ruy Diaz, the Cid Campeador; who was quite ready to fight for the emir of Saragossa against the king of Aragon, or to tear Valencia from another emir and hold it himself. But Alfonso of Castile established himself at Madrid, and in the year 1085 captured Toledo.

Meanwhile, across the strait the Almoravids, a sect composed mainly of Berber desert tribesmen, were establishing their supremacy among the African Moors. To their chief, Yussuf, the alarmed emirs in Spain appealed for aid. Yussuf came, inflicted an overwhelming defeat on Alfonso of Castile at Zallaca in 1086, and

instead of returning to Africa established himself as emir of Andalusia. The disaster of Zallaca failed of its full effect, because the Moors fell to fighting among themselves; while Yussuf was mastering the other emirs, the Cid captured Valencia (1096), and Alfonso renewed his advance. The Cid died in 1099, and soon afterwards Valencia was recaptured. Saragossa had not yet been taken, the Almoravids were supreme in the south and were threatening to overwhelm Alfonso, when Yussuf died in 1106 and Alfonso two years later. Yussuf's death had saved him.

In Germany the long minority of Henry IV had dissolved most of the work done by his father in strengthening the imperial authority. That authority the self-willed and hot-tempered Henry intended to recover. All his confidence was given to his own Swabian countrymen, to the intense disgust of the North Germans and more especially of the Saxons, who regarded themselves as entitled to the hegemony of the German 'nations,' though at the time they were without a duke. In 1073 Henry found himself involved in a contest with the rebellious Saxons, in which he came

very near defeat before he succeeded in forcing them to submission in 1075.

Now, when Pope Alexander died in 1073 the Roman populace acclaimed Archdeacon Hildebrand his successor. That highly irregular election was confirmed by the College of Cardinals, and the emperor was duly invited to give the ratification which he formally granted. The courtesies had been observed, and his own attention was fixed not upon Italy but upon Saxony. That election, however, was pregnant with revolution. In the old days vigorous



A GERMAN KING

An eleventh-century panel of walrus ivory shows us the garb of a German king at the moment when the Empire was entering on its long and bitter struggle with the Papacy.

*British Museum*



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popes had defied the emperor at Constantinople on questions of orthodoxy and ecclesiastical discipline; but since the time of Charlemagne and down to the death of Henry III in 1056 every pope of distinction had been indebted for much of his power to the active support of a sympathetic emperor, who would nevertheless have made very short work of any attempt to control him in the exercise of any functions which he regarded as within his own sphere. If Nicholas II and Alexander II had set their claims higher, it was at a time when the emperor was a child.

But now Gregory VII was about to assert the unprecedented claim that the temporal authority was subordinate to the spiritual, the emperor to the pope. His courage was infinite, his sincerity beyond all possible dispute. He was too single-hearted, too uncompromising, to be a diplomatist; he was as sure of his own mission as an Elijah or a Samuel; and he

identified that mission, the regeneration of the Church and of the world, with the supreme office to which he had now himself been called. No impulse towards regeneration could be looked for from the princes whom he saw around him.

For five-and-twenty years pope after pope, generally with Hildebrand beside him, had striven to reform the besetting sins of the churchmen—self-seeking, worldliness, laxity. Early in 1075 Gregory at a synod in Rome issued, as they had issued, decrees against simony and clerical marriages, formally forbidden but habitually practised; but to these was added a decree uncompromisingly forbidding lay investiture and denouncing penalties on all who should accept or convey such investiture. Protest against the practice, as an encroachment on the spiritual functions, was no new thing, but had been ignored by the princes. Bishops and abbots were holders of great territorial lordships; no prince could afford to let their appoint-

ment pass out of his own control, and the appointment carried with it, as a matter of course, investiture with the symbols of authority, spiritual as well as temporal. But Gregory's denunciation was not a mere protest; it was a declaration of war.

Henry IV, fresh from the victory which brought the Saxons to submission, took up the challenge. There was no lack of simoniacal prelates to support this view in Germany, and of his own authority he invested a new archbishop of Milan. In January, 1076, supported by a synod of German bishops at Worms, he answered Gregory's denunciations by declaring that he was no longer pope, and ordered him to 'Come down.' Gregory responded with a synod at the Vatican in February, and a decree excommunicating and deposing Henry and releasing his subjects from obedience to him. The battle was joined.



### HENRY IV ABASED AT CANOSSA

In 1076 the Papacy for a brief moment triumphed over the Empire, when Henry IV abased himself before Gregory VII at Canossa. Canossa was in the domains of the countess Matilda, one of the pope's most ardent supporters (see Chap. 106), and this MS. shows the emperor kneeling before her.

*Vatican Library, MS. Lat. 4922; photo, Giraudon*

## The Clash of East and West

But for Henry it was not merely a battle between Church and State. It was a fight for his own authority over his own lay vassals, who were fiercely suspicious of his aims and bent on yielding him no obedience which it was in their power to refuse. At a diet of the Empire in October the nobles and prelates not only refused him their support but required him to make submission and seek absolution from the pope before they would return to their obedience. The immediate result was the bitter humiliation of Canossa.

### Papal Triumph at Canossa

**I**N the depth of winter Henry slipped away with his wife and child from Speier, where he was almost a prisoner, through Burgundy to Lombardy, where the nobles, unlike the Germans, were ready to give him vigorous support. But he had persuaded himself that submission would restore the lost loyalty of the Germans, and he dared not face the issue of war. Gregory was at the mountain stronghold of Canossa, in the northern Apennines, expecting an attack by the Lombards, and surrounded by an august company of eminent churchmen. Thither the despairing emperor betook himself almost unattended, to throw himself on the mercy of his great antagonist. For four days he remained outside the gates in the snow, a suppliant clad in the scanty garb of the penitent. Gregory would give pardon only on terms of complete and abject submission. Even so, Henry was to be restored to his imperial dignity only after the pope had inquired into and passed judgement on the charges levelled against him by his German subjects; and if he were then restored he must obey the pope in all ecclesiastical matters.

The Lombards were disgusted by his craven submission; the Germans were so far from being conciliated that their diet, to which Gregory sent his legates instead of attending and presiding himself, repeated the charges, and without giving any opportunity of defence proceeded to elect a new emperor, Rudolf duke of Swabia.

They had gone too far. Henry hastened back to Germany, to find there a vigorous reaction in his favour. It was one thing

to overturn him; it was quite another to set up Rudolf. In the civil war which raged for two years, Rudolf's only whole-hearted supporters were the Saxons. Gregory declined to intervene actively. However, seeing that Henry reverted to the practice of lay investitures, Gregory in 1080, when Henry had met with a severe defeat, again declared him excommunicate and deposed, and recognized Rudolf, in terms asserting the power of the Church to bind and to loose, to raise up and to cast down kings and emperors.

Once more Gregory's confidence of victory had carried him too far, bringing Henry a host of new supporters. An assembly of German and Lombard bishops and nobles proclaimed the deposition of Gregory, and elected an anti-pope, who took the name of Clement III. Rudolf was killed in a great battle near Lützen before the year was over, and without haste or enthusiasm his partisans elected Hermann of Luxemburg as rival emperor to Henry. Manifestly now the serious enemy was the pope.

### Reaction in Favour of the Emperor

**I**NTO Italy, therefore, Henry carried the war. Rome with Gregory at the Vatican defied attack, though no external help was forthcoming even from the Normans, since Guiscard was more congenially occupied in invading Illyria. In 1081 and again the next year Henry failed to effect an entry. In 1083 he forced his way into the city. Gregory in the castle of S. Angelo still defied him, still demanded the unqualified submission of the enemy at his gate. Next year the emperor, after an expedition to Apulia, where the Normans were moving, returned with Clement to Rome, where the latter was enthroned as pope and crowned him emperor.

But the castle still held out; Robert Guiscard, at last fully alive to the danger to himself if Henry won a complete triumph, recrossed the Adriatic and marched on Rome at the head of a very miscellaneous force. Henry retreated; Robert forced his way into Rome, sacked it, working much havoc, and withdrew to the south. Gregory followed him from the desolated city, to which Clement



NICEPHORUS III THE USURPER

Nicephorus III Botaniates usurped the throne of the Eastern Empire from Michael Ducas in 1078. His efforts to expel the Turks from Asia Minor, with the help of his general Alexius Comnenus, were ineffectual; and in private he had a reputation for debauchery. He is here seen with his empress Maria.

*MS. of Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

returned, though he, too, retired ere long to Ravenna. The great pope, indomitable to the last, died soon after (May, 1085); defeated, as it seemed to the world. He knew that he had actually accomplished nothing, but that was not the thing that mattered: 'I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile—and therefore my hope is great.'

For three years there was a chaos of faction fighting in Rome. The cardinals elected a new pope, Victor III, who hid himself in a monastery, where his life flickered out after a year. And then in March, 1088, the cardinals found the man who was to carry Gregory's work forward, the Frenchman Urban II.

It was not, however, in direct conflict with Henry that Urban won his triumph. The pope preferred to content himself with fostering rebellion among Henry's

subjects and stirring up his eldest son, Conrad, against him; remaining for the most part in the south, where he was secure of the good will—on terms, at least—of the Norman duke of Apulia, Roger, younger son of Robert Guiscard who had died a month after Gregory, and nephew of the other Roger, now fully established as count of Sicily.

North Italy remained a cockpit in which Henry alternately won and lost the mastery and Conrad disputed with him the crown of Lombardy, while Clement's partisans dominated Rome from the castle of S. Angelo and the antipope himself remained in the security of Ravenna. It was not till 1094-5 that Henry was so hard pressed that Urban could set forth on that northern progress which culminated in the Congress of Clermont, the real climax of Urban's career. Not from Italy but from another quarter had come the great opportunity which he seized.

SINCE Manzikert the Greek Empire had been in very low water. After the death of Romanus, the feeble young emperor Michael Ducas was compelled to concede to the Turkish general Sulayman the 'governorship' of all those provinces of which he was in actual possession—in other words, all but an insignificant portion of Asia Minor; which Sulayman, with the assent of Malik Shah, very soon converted into the practically independent sultanate of Roum. A few years later Michael was deposed, but the usurper Nicephorus III proved almost as incompetent and in other respects far worse than Michael. Government went from bad to worse, till in 1081 the able general Alexius Comnenus removed Nicephorus and assumed the diadem, which remained in his family for a century.

## The Clash of East and West

Alexius was a skilful soldier, a capable administrator and an astute diplomatist, who had to make the best of bad materials. The best troops in his service were the Varangian guard, mostly composed of Swedes, Russians and miscellaneous Viking adventurers, and recently recruited from Englishmen who preferred the wages of the emperor to subjection to the Norman. The old Isaurian recruiting ground had passed under the sway of the Turk. The population over which he ruled was inert. Nicaea, the capital of Roum, was ominously near to the Bosphorus. And the moment of his accession was also the moment chosen by the ambitious and restless duke of Apulia for his attack on Dyrrhachium (Durazzo), which he captured after a victory won by and against precisely the same tactics as Duke William's victory at Hastings, the Varangians playing the heroic but futile part of Harold's household troops. To the Norman, a zealous papalist, the heretic empire was a tempting and legitimate prey.

Robert and his elder son, Bohemund, were soon in Macedonia, where the latter remained when his father hurried back to Italy to the rescue of Gregory in 1084. But Alexius saved himself from disaster by a crafty and competent strategy; Bohemund, too, returned to Italy on his father's death to secure himself in the possession at least of his county of Otranto; and for the time Alexius was relieved from the Norman peril.

### Alexius appeals for Help to Urban

THERE was work enough for him in the recovery of effective control in his own dominions, but his ambition was to recover it also in the lost provinces of the Empire, which there was no hope of doing without aid from the West, and he set himself to procure that aid. He had already found Gregory not averse from the idea of a Holy War but dangerously disposed to make ecclesiastical submission to Rome a necessary condition. At first he had been inspired rather by fear of the Seljuks than by ambition, but his hopes rose with the disintegration of the Seljuk power on the death of Malik Shah in 1092. Still relying on the emotional

aspects of Turkish misrule in the Holy Land, he renewed his appeal to Pope Urban in 1095.

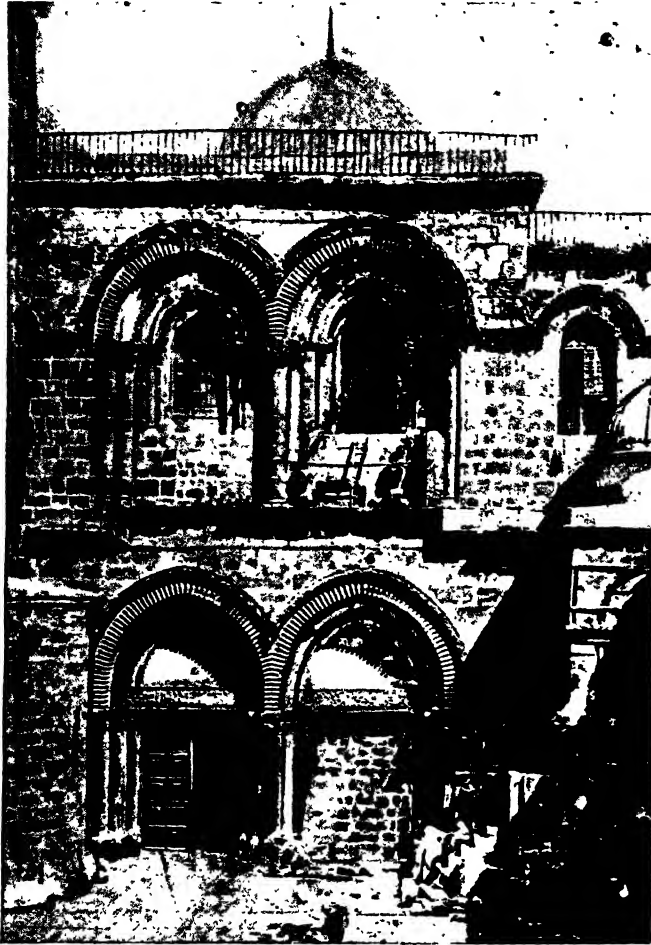
Urban had gathered at Piacenza a great assembly of which the first business was to denounce the sins of Henry and once more to proclaim the disciplinary decrees against simony and marriage of clerics. There was an emotional atmosphere in which the words of Alexius' envoys took deep effect; but Urban did not yet give himself rein. He moved north to Burgundy, and meanwhile the seeds were being sown.

### Urban launches the First Crusade

URBAN was in the heart of the country which was the cradle of the Cluniac ideals. There in November a vast concourse was gathered at Clermont. For once we may with absolute rightness use a much-abused phrase and say that Urban had found, had indeed almost created, the psychological moment. To that concourse he issued his passionate appeal to Christian men to lay aside their private quarrels and discords and unite for the redemption of the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels; the multitude was swept away on the torrent of irresistible emotion, and answered with one universal cry, 'It is the will of God.' Urban had launched the First Crusade.

Essentially the appeal was not to political interests but to religious emotion; necessarily it sought and found its response not from governments and rulers as such, but from voluntary individual action. Leadership in such a movement was entirely impossible for the excommunicate emperor Henry, who was popularly regarded as a monster of iniquity, the excommunicate king of France, or the tyrant William Rufus who was ruling in England. No monarch as yet took part in organizing the movement whose impulse proceeded quite definitely from the pope, was most zealously fostered by the clergy, and permeated all social ranks.

Crusaders were, no doubt, stirred in many cases by various motives other than religious enthusiasm. For the ambitious new principalities might be attainable, for everyone there was at least the chance of winning the military



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

As long as the Mahomedans allowed access to the holy places in Palestine, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, there was no incentive to a crusade. This they did until the rise of the Turks, whose repressive measures gave Alexius the argument he needed to move Pope Urban II.

renown which medieval knighthood coveted above all other prizes. If religious ardour were itself lacking, it was still worth while to get the credit for displaying it. In the last account with Heaven, to have fallen in battle with the infidel would outweigh a multitude of sins. Merely as an adventure, crusading offered no small attraction. But in a great number of instances the primary motive at least was a genuine religious zeal.

The small men joined the standards of the great nobles who took the Cross: Robert of Normandy, who trustfully mortgaged his dukedom to his royal brother of England in order to raise the

necessary funds—dull of wit but a mighty man of his hands; Raymond of Toulouse; Godfrey, duke of Lower Lorraine and Bouillon, commonly but erroneously known as count of Boulogne; Bohemund of Otranto and others, men of mark and practised in war. While they were making efficient preparation, the ill directed zeal of Peter the Hermit and a knight known as Walter the Penniless led a rabble of enthusiasts on a wild expedition which got itself across the Bosphorus and was dissipated, cut to pieces or carried into slavery by Kilij Arslan, the sultan of Roum.

A year after the Congress of Clermont the real crusading host was swarming to its appointed meeting-place, Constantinople. Alexius had overreached himself. Hoping to raise in the West a force of warriors whose services would enable him to recover Asia Minor, he had called in a mighty host which cared not at all for his empire and seemed not unlikely to begin its operations by dismembering what was left of it. But his diplomatic skill was equal to the occasion. In the spring of 1097 he had passed them

all safely over the Bosphorus, with no intention of facilitating their return, their leaders pledged to fealty while within the theoretical borders of the Empire, of which the provinces, when reconquered, were to be restored to him.

The crusaders laid siege to Nicaea, which surrendered in June. A great victory at Dorylaeum drove Kilij Arslan east in a skilful retreat in which he cleared the country of provisions before the invaders. But he could not stem their advance. Asia Minor was won. The crusaders made their way through the Taurus. Baldwin, the brother of Godfrey, hastened to the aid of Edessa, in upper Mesopotamia, which

## The Clash of East and West

was held by Christian Armenians, and established himself there as its prince. In October the main army laid siege to Antioch, which stubbornly defied their attack till the following June. Even then it was only treachery within the walls that gave Bohemund the entry, which was turned to account by a savage massacre.

### Fall of Jerusalem to the Crusaders

**D**ISSENSIONS were already raging among the Christians. They were also raging among the Saracens. Some months earlier the Egyptian Fatimids had set about the recovery of Palestine from the Turks, and had offered alliance, with promises to restore the old tolerant regime which had so long sufficed to satisfy Western sentiment in the past. A month after the fall of Antioch the Fatimids captured Jerusalem. But the Holy City itself was the crusaders' goal; it was to be delivered from the infidel, tolerant or intolerant, Fatimid or Turk.

It was not till the next spring, however, that the main army advanced on Jerusalem, leaving Bohemund in possession at Antioch (1099). In July, in a grand assault, Jerusalem was taken by storm, the capture being accompanied by a terrible massacre. Once more the banner of the Cross floated over the Holy City.

In effect what had been accomplished was the recovery of a large part of Asia Minor, but by no means the whole of it, for the Greek Empire; and of Syria from the Taurus to Jaffa, with a section of north Mesopotamia, by and for a group of adventurers under no single chief, whose leaders were great feudal nobles at home, but owed allegiance to no man in respect of the lands they had conquered. The adventurers, that is, were in military occupation of a wide area in which they could never be anything more than a garrison, since there was no prospect of attracting to it a great body of permanent European colonists, and their

conquest could be retained only by force of arms against attacks which would become exceedingly formidable if those enemies whose mutual antagonisms had made the conquest possible should unite.

For the garrisons the adventurers themselves could provide only a nucleus; for the rest they must rely on the irregular stream of temporary volunteers from the West. Such a stream was more or less insured by the exceptional character of the motive that had inspired the conquest; the adventurers won it and held it, so to speak, in trust for Christendom. At intervals, and for special reasons, the normal stream swelled to abnormal dimensions; the expedition which was on the largest scale is by general consent entitled the Third Crusade, but no principle can be laid down for the numbering of those which came after it.

Such then was the basis on which the conquerors had to organize their conquest when completed. Orthodox feudal theory required an official monarch for the kingdom of Jerusalem, to whom the rest would owe allegiance much as Robert or Raymond owed allegiance to their royal suzerain Philip. Godfrey was the first king, though he refused the royal title, since he would not wear the golden circle where the Saviour had worn the crown of thorns. He would only call himself



### ARMOUR SUCH AS THE CRUSADERS WORE

The equipment of twelfth-century warriors, such as those who streamed to and fro between Europe and Palestine after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 and the formation of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, is well shown in this illustration of a siege, where the attackers are setting fire to the houses

*MS. of Herrade de Landsberg; photo, Hachette*

count. Bohemund remained prince of Antioch, Baldwin count of Edessa; the conquest of Tripolis between Antioch and Palestine provided another county for Raymond; each county had its baronies. When Godfrey died in 1100, Baldwin succeeded him and was the first titular king of Jerusalem.

The 'Latin Kingdom' thus covered the whole of what had been known in ancient days as Palestine and Phœnicia, with Antioch, extending north across the Euphrates to Edessa. The kingdom had not grown up, but was deliberately modelled on the theory and practice of feudalism as understood in western Europe and consequently provided the most typical example of the feudal policy or constitution. Its fuller development may be studied in Chapter 109.

The whole Latin Kingdom, though its length from Edessa to Jaffa and Askelon was great, was none the less but a narrow strip from which no substantial eastward advance was made. Its Mediterranean ports were acquired only by degrees, and by the aid of the maritime cities of Italy which sought and found a rich commercial harvest by establishing their communities therein. Venice and Genoa in particular had their special quarters from which intercourse with the merchants of the East radiated, and on which it converged.

The organization of the kingdom was mainly the work of Baldwin I (1100-1118), who left his cousin, afterwards Baldwin II, at Edessa. Elected to the succession on the death of Baldwin I, the second Baldwin (1118-1130) carried on the work of his predecessor. Both were men of ability, but neither was able materially



## FIRST OF THE PLANTAGENETS

Geoffrey of Anjou, known as Plantagenet from his habit of wearing broom (*planta genista*) in his cap, was father of Henry II of England (1133-89).

*Le Mans Museum*

to enlarge the kingdom, though the capture of Sidon fell in the reign of the first, and of Tyre in that of the second. Baldwin II was succeeded by his son-in-law Fulk of Anjou (1131-1143), whose eldest son, Geoffrey, was the father of Henry II of England. Fulk's reign was vigorous and successful; but when he died and his French county went to Geoffrey, the crown of Jerusalem passed to his very youthful half-brother, Baldwin III; and then disaster began.

We saw that on the death of Malik Shah the Seljuk power disintegrated. The great sultan's attention was concentrated on Persia and the East; the enemies against whom the crusading hosts had to fight, their way were the minor sultans of Roum and Mosul, and the Egyptian Fatimids in Palestine

itself. Now, in 1127 the Turk Zangi became lord or atabeg of Mosul. In the next few years Zangi's sway was extended over Mahomedan Syria and Mesopotamia. In 1142 he turned his arms against Edessa, where he was vigorously checked by Joscelyn of Courtenay on whom Baldwin II, when he became king, had bestowed the county. But Joscelyn and Fulk died almost at the same moment; the second Joscelyn was a poor creature; the kingdom of Jerusalem was out of action; and in 1144 Zangi captured the great northern fortress. The massacre at Jerusalem was requited in kind—and in full measure. Two years later Zangi died and was succeeded by the very able Nour ed-Din. The fall of Edessa was the first great shock to the Latin Kingdom.

Meanwhile in the West the struggle between Papacy and Empire, temporal



## The Clash of East and West

and spiritual authority, Church and State, had passed through its first phase. Urban died a fortnight after the fall of Jerusalem, the triumphant climax of the crusade which he had launched, himself unquestionably the supreme figure in Christendom. His successor, Paschal II (1099-1118), was resolute to maintain the ascendancy that Urban had won. He would make no concessions to the unfortunate Henry, who was now eager for reconciliation on almost any terms; his son Conrad was in arms against him, and it was quite impossible for him to bring either Germany or Italy under control so long as he lay under the papal anathema, which provided an unfailing excuse or pretext for rebellion.

### Relations of Henry V with Pope Paschal

**H**ENRY disinherited Conrad in favour of the younger son Henry, who was crowned as Henry V on condition that he would exercise no regal rights during his father's life. This indeed was of little moment while Conrad was still in arms. Conrad, however, died in 1101; but Paschal remained deaf to Henry's overtures, and in 1104 the younger Henry, who never allowed scruples of honour or generosity to stand in the way of what he took to be his interests, broke faith and called the ever rebellious Saxony to arms against his father. The emperor lost hope and spirit and threw himself on the mercy of the young king, who was not ashamed to entreat his forgiveness and then shut him up and compel him to abdicate. Henry IV escaped, but died in 1106, denied the papal absolution to the last.

But if Henry V (1106-1125) had turned the dispute with the pope to his own account in the quarrel with Henry IV it was with no intention of surrendering any imperial claims. For some time he was occupied with Hungarian and Bohemian wars, but in 1110 he was free to take that matter in hand, and descended on Italy with an army behind him. Paschal discovered that there was no quarter from which he could count upon armed support, and, in effect, surrendered. The Church would yield her temporal estates but not her exclusive right of ecclesiastical appointment and investiture.

The offer to sacrifice temporalities for spiritual freedom would have been magnificent if it had not been dictated by fear; but it was correctly interpreted as an act of sheer pusillanimity. It was accepted as a matter of course by Henry, to whom it gave far more than he could ever have attempted to demand; but when he presented himself for coronation as emperor at S. Peter's the ceremony was stopped by a scene of furious tumult. Henry retired with the pope a prisoner in his hands; Paschal gave way altogether, conceding even the investitures; the mob was not given a second chance, and the coronation was carried through (1111).

Paschal might give way, but he could not take the churchmen with him; they unanimously repudiated the compact, and would have repudiated his authority altogether had he not, as soon as the emperor's back was turned, discovered that the pledge was invalid as having been extorted under duress. Moreover, all the forces that had operated against Henry IV in the same quarrel were now brought to bear against Henry V, while the clergy were solid instead of being divided. The Empire was in a ferment of plots and revolts. In 1118 Paschal died; a new pope was elected; Henry set up an antipope of his own; the new pope died, and the cardinals elected a Burgundian prelate experienced in statecraft, Calixtus II (1119).

### Solutions of the Investiture Question

**I**N England a practical solution of the investiture problem had been reached some years before by the wisdom of the saintly archbishop Anselm and the shrewdness of the particularly hard-headed king, the Conqueror's youngest son, Henry I. The crown could propose a candidate for ecclesiastical office and veto an unsuitable candidate, but otherwise the election was to be free; on the other hand, the elected candidate must do homage for his temporalities like any lay baron, but must not be invested with the spiritual office and its symbols by a layman. The Church could not force a candidate on the crown nor the crown on the Church, and neither the spiritual

## Chronicle XVIII. 1073-1152

nor the temporal power encroached on the functions of the other.

Calixtus, like Anselm, wanted not war but peace; he resolved to seek a compromise on the obviously reasonable lines; and that end he achieved, not without the many difficulties which attend any policy of compromise between hot antagonists, by the Concordat of Worms (1122), virtually a repetition of the English settlement. Within three years both pope and emperor were dead; at Worms the investiture conflict was buried. But it had been only one phase of a wider one, which was by no means ended.

### Struggle for Reform within the Church

THE conflict between the spiritual and temporal power was, in fact, the political aspect of what was in its initiation a religious movement as zealously supported by the greatest princes from Otto the Great to Henry III as by the great churchmen. The reform of the Church itself, the development of its influence in Christianising a world professedly Christian but very far from Christian in its normal activities, was the aim of the Cluniac reformers and of the popes from Leo IX to Alexander II. That motive was no less strong in Hildebrand, but with him it led to the conclusion that the kingdom of God would never be established on earth by laymen dominating the Church but only by the Church dominating the laymen.

To dominate the laymen the actual possession of the temporal power was necessary, and hence developed the conflict between Church and State. At the same time the striving for temporal power was itself a de-spiritualising influence upon those who took a leading part in the conflict. But the pure religious enthusiasm was constantly finding expression in movements of the same type as that of Cluny, the founding and development of religious orders bound to an ideal rule of life. If Cluny itself had somewhat fallen away, its place as a spiritual power was more than taken by the recently founded Cistercian order and, above all, by the monastery of Clairvaux and its great abbot Bernard.

To the same impulse was due the foundation of those military orders of knights bound by the monastic yows of celibacy, poverty and obedience, the Knights Templars and Knights Hospitallers or Knights of S. John, who played so large a part in the eastern wars; and of the Austin Canons or Canons Regular, ordained to combine the functions of the monk, who was bound to a rule ('regula'), with the ministry of the secular diocesan or parish clergy, who were under no special rule.

### The Papacy and Roger of Sicily

CALIXTUS, a pope whose all too brief reign had shown how much could yet be done by a man who was both strong and wise, was followed by Honorius II, whose legal acumen had been invaluable in the work of shaping the Concordat of Worms but did not suffice to make him a competent leader. His main difficulties were with the third of the Rogers, Roger II of Sicily, who had actually succeeded his father, Roger I, when a baby, in 1101. Roger of Apulia, the son of Guiscard, died in 1111; his line was extinguished a few years later, and Roger of Sicily resolved to unite his own county with Apulia.

Both Apulia and Sicily had originally been granted to Robert Guiscard as fiefs held from the pope by Nicholas II. Roger effected his object (1127), and with very small regard for his suzerain proceeded to absorb the remaining minor principalities of South Italy. Honorius strove vainly to form a league against him, but was compelled to recognize Roger's claims.

On the death of Honorius in 1130 his successor, regularly elected, was Anacletus, a candidate so offensive to the advanced party that they elected Innocent II in opposition. Innocent won the support of Bernard of Clairvaux, which was of even more importance than that of the emperor, which was also given to him; but the contest between pope and antipope continued for eight years, during which Anacletus bought Roger's support by the title of 'king' of Sicily, which Innocent—the ultimate victor in the strife—was finally forced to recognize.

The death of Henry V without a direct heir in 1125 may be regarded as the

## The Clash of East and West

beginning of another rivalry, between two great German houses, which was fraught with future strife. The Bavarian house of Welf had been commonly at odds with a succession of emperors and had habitually sided with the Papacy. The dukedom of Swabia had passed to Frederick, of Hohenstaufen and Weiblingen, whose wife was the sister and his sons the nephews of Henry V. These sons, Frederick and Conrad, were now respectively dukes of Swabia and Franconia. Henry had destined one or other of his nephews to be his successor, but the combination of Bavaria with Saxony gave the imperial crown to the old and able duke of Saxony, Lothair II (1125-37).

### Origin of Guelphs and Ghibellines

THE matrimonial complications are not without interest. Henry the Black of Bavaria, who died next year, was the father-in-law of Frederick, but his son, Henry the Proud, became the son-in-law of Lothair. Ultimately the son of that marriage, the Welf Henry the Lion, became duke of both Bavaria and Saxony, when his cousin, the offspring of the other marriage, Frederick of Hohenstaufen or Weiblingen, was seated on the imperial throne as Frederick I. From the names Welf and Weiblingen derive the Guelph and Ghibelline, which later became the party labels of Italian factions, originating as Welf papalists and Hohenstaufen or Weiblingen imperialists (see Chap. 106).

Lothair's seizure of some of Frederick's lands brought on a civil war, in which Conrad of Franconia was set up as a rival German king; but in 1135 the Hohenstaufen gave way and general peace was established, the old emperor—who was then past seventy—being too politic to be vindictive. Lothair did, in fact, devote himself mainly to the cause of peace, greatly to the benefit of the Empire, especially by his missionary zeal on the still pagan and barbarian north-eastern marches. Instigated by Bernard of Clairvaux, he went to Italy to support Innocent II against Apacletus and his ally Roger, and to be officially crowned emperor by the pope; but the final effect of his interposition was a serious quarrel, which only

his own death (1137) prevented from developing into open hostilities.

Henry the Proud, duke of Bavaria and of Saxony in right of his wife, and lord of great possessions in Tuscany, aspired to the succession; but his power as a prince was, in the eyes of other German princes, a very good reason for not making him emperor. A diet attended by neither Saxons nor Bavarians elected Conrad of Franconia, the first Hohenstaufen emperor. As was to be expected, the immediate result was civil war, which was not ended by Henry's death in 1139, his duchies having been officially forfeited while refusing to acknowledge their new dukes. A peace, however, was presently patched up by the reinstatement of the boy Henry (the Lion) in the Saxon duchy and of his mother and stepfather, the count of the Palatinate (for she promptly married again), in Bavaria. The peace had not long been established when the West was startled by the ominous news of the fall of Edessa, the outer bulwark of Christendom in Asia.

### England and Scotland in Norman Times

ENGLAND during the first half of the twelfth century was passing through the best and the worst periods of the Norman rule (see Chaps. 98 and 105). William I had reigned as a conqueror who had to establish his domination over the conquered English and also over the new baronage, Norman, French, Breton or Fleming, with whom he had to share the spoil. William II, a soldier hardly inferior to his father, reigned as a tyrant by the might of his arm. Henry I (1100-1135) won the name of the Lion of Justice not because he cared in the least for justice in the abstract, but because he saw the way to power in enforcing stern justice whenever it did not collide with his own interest, and it paid him better to rule a well ordered than an orderless state.

But when Henry died, leaving a daughter, who was married to Geoffrey of Anjou (her first husband had been the emperor Henry V), but no son, his nephew Stephen of Blois captured the crown, and there followed a period of appalling misrule or no-rule while his



**DAVID I OF SCOTLAND**

The charter of Malcolm IV of Scotland to Kelso Abbey shows him (right) and his father, David I, its founder. David's sister had married Henry I of England, thus perpetuating the Saxon royal line; while he married Henry's sister.

adherents and those of his cousin the 'Empress Maud' fought each other up and down the country, robbing and pillaging; so that men cried out that 'Christ and his saints slept,' and the only power which sought to uphold some standard of justice and decency was the Church.

The period, on the other hand, was one of very marked progress in the northern kingdom of Scotland. Malcolm III, after ridding himself of Macbeth, had established himself on the throne with no rival. He kept or broke the peace with the Normans as occasion suggested, and found it advisable to pay some sort of homage to both the Williams; but whether it was for his crown or only for estates held by him in the north of England is a question quite impossible of certain solution. Assuredly, however, no Scots king after him, except his son Edgar, ever admitted an English king's title to overlordship.

More than any of his predecessors, however, he did deliberately Anglicise the Lowlands under the influence of his wife Margaret, a princess of the old English royal family; from which two results followed: the Latin Church finally predominated over the Celtic Church in Scotland as well as in England, and, through the marriage of his daughter to Henry I of England, the blood of the house of Alfred has flowed in the veins of every king or queen regnant thereafter in England or Scotland until this day.

Malcolm was killed on an English foray in 1093, when his brother Donalbane usurped the throne, to be ejected later by Malcolm's sons, three of whom reigned in succession. The third, David I (1124-1153), played an active part in England as a feudatory in respect of English earldoms, and on behalf of his niece the Empress Maud. His reign confirmed what might be called a perpetual alliance between the crown and the Church in Scotland as against the feudal nobility, but it also gave the nobility its special brand of feudalism by the bestowal of many fiefs upon Normans who were also feudatories of the king of England.



**SEALS OF RUFUS AND MAUD**

Lower: seal of William II 'Rufus' (1087-1100). Top: that of Maud or Matilda, the 'Empress' (she had first married the emperor Henry V), whose struggles with Stephen (1125-35) rent the kingdom.

*British Museum*

In France the power of the monarchy grew under the successors of Philip I. They followed a policy of patient and cautious persistence that bore steady fruit. Louis VI 'the Fat' (1108-1137) allied the crown with the Church by being always ready to pose or act as the champion of the oppressed, especially of oppressed clerics, against tyrannical barons; he chose men as his counselors not because they were powerful but because they were useful, herein following the example of his shrewd and troublesome vassal

Henry I of Normandy and England; he skilfully fostered the feuds of the vassals themselves, and not infrequently reaped material profit thereby; and when he died his son Louis VII (1137-1180) continued the same policy of alliance with the Church and the undermining of the power of the nobles.

But one most promising step which Louis VII took proved in the end to be most disastrous. While he was crown prince, he married Eleanor, the youthful heiress of Aquitaine, who brought with her wider territories than were under the sway of any other French feudatory; but within a short time they quarrelled so seriously that the marriage was dissolved, on the ground of consanguinity, and the insulted Eleanor was promptly united to Henry count of Anjou, duke of Normandy and heir to the throne of England; who thereby became duke of Aquitaine also, and lord of more than another quarter of France.

WHILE the Latin Kingdom was holding its own in Syria, the Christian states were again advancing in Spain, where the conflict was taking increasingly the character of a war of religion. Such would, in any case, have been the inevitable effect of the crusades in the East, which had stirred the spirit of fanaticism in Christians and Moslems alike, as it had not been stirred in the earlier conflicts. But to this was added the fact that the Berber Almoravids were very much more intolerant than the long-established Moors of Spain, and their harsh treatment of their 'Mozarabic' (i.e. Christian) subjects affected popular sentiment much as had the violence of the Turks in Palestine. The Spaniards were looked upon and regarded themselves as crusaders, and other crusaders bound for

prout una  
pau pcur.  
ex que uneg  
dum de  
gabn. qd p  
y nnt p lict  
nment pntm  
dne qd mnt  
a sperate si  
tal. mrendia.  
x. ab hostib  
te. n narrat  
pant. Dra  
no defect.  
p. maly ocl



STANDARD OF BATTLE

In 1138 the Scots were defeated near Northallerton by the English border militia at the Battle of the Standard, so called from the crucifix that led them to victory.

*Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*

Palestine considered that campaigning in Spain en route was a partial fulfilment at least of their crusading vows. Saracens were the enemies of the Cross, whether in Spain or in Syria.

We saw (page 2647) that Alfonso VI of Castile made a great advance, which was checked by the appearance of the Almoravid Yussuf, who was threatening to reverse the position when he died in 1106. For the next few years internal dissensions among Christians on one side and Saracens on the other prevented any material advance of either. But in 1118 Alfonso I of Aragon captured Saragossa, which had hitherto defied the efforts of the Spanish princes, thereafter dealt

repeated blows to the Moors in Valencia, and before his death in 1134 raised Aragon



JOHN II COMNENUS AND HIS SON

John II succeeded Alexius Comnenus at Constantinople in 1118 and proved as able a ruler as his astutely diplomatic father. This illumination from a manuscript dated 1128 shows him and his son Alexis crowned by Christ.

*From G. Millet, Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne*

to a foremost place among the kingdoms, which it had not hitherto achieved.

His work in the east of the peninsula was carried on by Raymond Berengar, count of Barcelona, who later united Aragon with Catalonia by marrying Alfonso's daughter Petronilla. On the western side Alfonso count of Portugal converted his little county into the kingdom of Portugal, between 1139 and 1148, by conquering the country as far as Lisbon; and in 1149 Sancho IX of Castile signalled the capture of Calatrava by setting up there a Cistercian monastery. This great advance was facilitated by the rise in Morocco of a new and still more fanatical Berber sect which, having there won the mastery, invaded Spain in 1145. The four years during which the Almohades were overturning the Almoravids were the opportunity of the Spaniards.

## Events in the Eastern Empire

MEANWHILE there had been no co-operation between the Eastern Empire and the Latin crusaders. From their first appearance at Constantinople, Alexius had realized that he had very little to hope and much to fear from them; he had done far more to thwart than to help them; and after his death in 1118 his successor John had seen no reason to change an attitude which was fully reciprocated by the Latins, or 'Franks,' as the East called them and calls the Europeans to this day. Even in Palestine itself the Franks distinguished between their 'Catholic' and their 'Orthodox' subjects, taxing the latter but not the former.

John (1118-1143) was an able and just ruler who gave to the Empire peace at home and was usually successful in such wars as he found it necessary to wage abroad, but he sought no reconciliation with the Franks. There was at least one respect in which the Empire had suffered from the establishment of the Latin Kingdom: the Levantine ports had robbed Constantinople of its trade, which had passed into the hands of the Genoese and

Venetians; and the loss had not been made good by the trading concessions in Constantinople itself granted by Alexius to the great maritime republic on the Adriatic.

## Fate of the Second Crusade

THE fall of Edessa startled the West and raised to white heat the crusading ardour of Bernard of Clairvaux, whose appeals for a new crusade rang through Christendom. Several expeditions on a considerable scale had set forth since the First Crusade, but all such had collapsed with varying degrees of ignominy. A mighty effort was now called for. Louis VII of France, already bent on taking the Cross to expiate a catastrophe for which he felt that he had been responsible, answered the appeal. With less enthusiasm the emperor Conrad III was persuaded to follow Louis' example.

Yet the fate of that so-called Second Crusade was the fate of its predecessors. It was headed by two of the three most powerful monarchs of the West (for Roger of Sicily had in hand the separate business of conquering Saracens in Africa). It met with nothing but disaster. Conrad was first in the field. With a pretence of aid from his brother-emperor Manuel (1143-1180), John's successor at Constantinople, he passed into Asia Minor in 1146 with a mighty host; Louis followed next year, but was joined at Nicaea by Conrad with only the remnant of his army, which had been cut to pieces. The crusaders tried a new route to the south coast; of those who reached it only a few were able to embark for Syria; the rest perished miserably. The small band remaining flung itself on Damascus, and would seem to have been on the point of taking it, when the leaders were tricked by treasonable counsels into changing their plan of attack, whereby failure became inevitable; and first Conrad, and then Louis went home with the followers that were left to them (1149).

In 1152 Conrad died; and the choice of the imperial electors fell upon his nephew Frederick Barbarossa.

## END OF FOURTH VOLUME







